READING THE LATE BYZANTINE ROMANCE

A Handbook

EDITED BY

Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson

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READING THE LATE BYZANTINE ROMANCE

The corpus of Palaiologan romances consists of about a dozen works of imaginative fiction from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries which narrate the trials and tribulations of aristocratic young lovers. This volume brings together leading scholars of Byzantine literature to examine the corpus afresh and aims to be the definitive work on the subject, suitable for scholars and students of all levels. It offers interdisciplinary and transnational approaches which demonstrate the aesthetic and cultural value of these works in their own right and their centrality to the medieval and early modern Greek, European and Mediterranean literary traditions. From a historical perspective, the volume also emphasizes how the romances represent a turning point in the history of Greek letters: they are a repository of both ancient and medieval oral poetic and novelistic traditions and yet are often considered the earliest works of modern Greek literature.

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Contents

Notes on Contributors *page* vii
Acknowledgements xi
Note on the Late Byzantine Romances and Their Editions xiii

1 An Introduction to the Palaiologan Romance: Narrating the Vernacular 1
Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson

2 The Categories of 'Originals' and 'Adaptations' in Late Byzantine Romance: A Reassessment 19
Kostas Yiavis

3 Intercultural Encounters in the Late Byzantine Vernacular Romance 40
Carolina Cupane

4 Dreams and Female Initiation in *Livistros and Rhodamne* and *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* 69
Efthymia Priki

5 The Acculturation of the French Romance *Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne* in the Byzantine *Imperios and Margarona* 101
Romina Luzi

6 Chronotopes between East and West in *Apollonios of Tyre* 125
Francesca Rizzo Nervo

7 Linguistic Contacts in the Late Byzantine Romances: Where Cultural Influence Meets Language Interference 144
Theodore Markopoulos

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8 From Herakles to Erkoulios, or the Place of the *War of Troy* in the Late Byzantine Romance Movement 166
Elizabeth Jeffreys

9 Troy in Byzantine Romances: Homeric Reception in *Digenis Akritis*, the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy* 188
Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson

10 Herodotean Material in a Late Version of the *Alexander Romance* 211
Corinne Jouanno

11 The Palaiologan Hagiographies: Saints Without Romance 230
Charis Messis

12 Homosocial Desire in the *War of Troy*: Between (Wo)men 254
Stavroula Constantinou

13 Literary Landscapes in the Palaiologan Romances: An Ecocritical Approach 272
Kirsty Stewart

14 The Affective Community of Romance: Love, Privilege and the Erotics of Death in the Mediterranean 299
Megan Moore

15 The Bookseller's Parrot: A Fictional Afterword 321
Panagiotis A. Agapitos

Index 340

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The aim of the conference was to open up new avenues of exploration for the so-called Palaiologan romances, to account for new scholarly developments and to encourage comparative, cross-disciplinary and theoretical approaches. Not all papers that were presented at the conference are included in the volume, and some of the contributors did not attend the conference. The call for papers and the conference remain, though, the source of inspiration for the majority of chapters, and we would therefore like to thank all those who were present in Athens and contributed to the interesting and stimulating discussions. We are grateful also to those contributors who agreed to join the volume at a later stage.

Adam Goldwyn wishes to thank Dumbarton Oaks, where much of the work was completed during a 2016/17 research fellowship, the other fellows and in particular Elena Boeck, then director of Byzantine Studies. He would also like to thank his colleagues at North Dakota State University for the collegial and supportive environment they provide.

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Note on the Late Byzantine Romances and Their Editions

Readers who approach the late Byzantine romances for the first time may be confused by the fluctuant boundaries of the corpus,[1] as well as the varying use of titles and spelling of those titles.[2] In addition, the textual situation of several of the romances, surviving in different versions that are edited separately and read as different works, may seem unusual and the dating of several works is still tentative. In this volume we have standardized the transliteration of titles and names,[3] but have left it to the contributors to use the editions they prefer and indicate the dating for which they argue. We hope that the cross-references will help readers to navigate among the different chapters, but we should also like to offer an annotated list of titles and what may be seen as standard editions of the romances discussed in this volume. Translations into modern languages have also been included. Our list is organized according to tentative dating and does not divide the romances into 'originals' and 'translations' or 'adaptations'. For further details of dating and textual transmission, readers may consult the more detailed discussions of the individual chapters.

***Livistros and Rhodamne* – also *Tale of Livistros and Rhodamne* (Mid-Thirteenth Century)[4]**

J. A. Lambert (ed.), *Le roman de Libistros et Rhodamné publié d'après les manuscrits de Leyde et de Madrid avec une introduction, des observations grammaticales et un glossaire* (Amsterdam 1935) (**E**).

[1] For instance, some of the standard works, such as Beaton 1996 and Agapitos 2004, do not define the corpus according to the same criteria. See also Cupane 2016.

[2] Again, standard works tend to use different titles and different spelling; cf. for example Cupane 2016 with Agapitos 2004. As for Byzantine names beyond the Palaiologan romances, they are in this volume transliterated according to their spelling in the *ODB*, whereas we use the Latinized spelling of ancient Greek names and places (i.e. Photios, but Herodotus).

[3] Following, in principle, Agapitos 2004 and 2012.

[4] Dating according to Agapitos 1993. Cf. Cupane 2004: 440 and 2016: 101. See also Lendari 2007: 65–71. On questions of versions and manuscripts, see Agapitos 2006: 67–93 and Lendari 2007: 56–64. See also Chapter 4 in the present volume.

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P. A. Agapitos (ed.), *Ἀφήγησις Λιβίστρου καὶ Ροδάμνης. Κριτικὴ ἔκδοση τῆς διασκευῆς «ἄλφα»* (Athens 2006) (**α**).

T. Lendari (ed.), *Ἀφήγησις Λιβίστρου καὶ Ροδάμνης (Livistros and Rodamni): The Vatican Version. Critical Edition with Introduction, Commentary, and Index-Glossary* (Athens 2007) (**V**).

G. Betts (trans.), *Three Medieval Greek Romances: Velthandros and Chrysandza, Kallimachos and Chrysorroi, Livistros and Rodamni* (New York 1995), 95–192.

C. Cupane, 'Il romanzo', in *La cultura bizantina*, ed. G. Cavalo. (Rome 2004) 407–53.

'Una passeggiata nei boschi narrativi. Lo statuto della finzione nel "Medioevo romanzo e Orientale"', *JÖB* 63 (2013): 61–90.

'In the Realm of Eros: The Late Byzantine Vernacular Romance – Original Texts', in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. C. Cupane and B. Krönung. (Leiden and Boston 2016) 95–126.

War of Troy (Second Half of Thirteenth Century)[5]

M. Papathomopoulos and E. M. Jeffreys (eds.), *Ὁ Πόλεμος τῆς Τρωάδος (The War of Troy). Κριτικὴ ἔκδοση με εἰσαγωγὴ καὶ πίνακες* (Athens 1996).

Velthandros and Chysantza (Late Thirteenth Century)[6]

E. Kriaras (ed.), *Βυζαντινὰ ἱπποτικὰ μυθιστορήματα* (Athens 1955), 101–30.

C. Cupane (ed.), *Romanzi cavallereschi bizantini: Callimaco e Crisorroe, Beltandro e Crisanza, Storia di Achille, Florio e Plaziaflore, Storia di Apollonio di Tiro, Favola consolatoria sulla Cattiva e la Buona Sorte* (Turin 1995), 227–305 (revised version of Kriaras 1955 with Italian trans.)

J. M. Egea (ed.), *Historia extraordinaria de Beltandro y Crisanza. Estudio preliminar, texto griego, traduccion, notas y comentarios* (Granada 1998) (with Spanish trans.).

G. Betts (trans.), *Three Medieval Greek Romances: Velthandros and Chrysandza, Kallimachos and Chrysorroi, Livistros and Rodamni* (New York 1995), 5–32.

Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe (First Half of Fourteenth Century)[7]

E. Kriaras (ed.), *Βυζαντινὰ ἱπποτικὰ μυθιστορήματα* (Athens 1955), 29–83.

[5] Dating according to Jeffreys 2013; for a detailed discussion, see Chapter 8 in the present volume. The *War of Troy* was included in Beaton 1996, but excluded in the discussion by Agapitos 2004: 14; in the present volume it is argued that it belongs among the Palaiologan romances (see Chapters 7, 8 and 12).

[6] Dating according to Agapitos 2004: 13.

[7] This is one of the few Palaiologan romances that may perhaps be attributed to a specific author: Andronikos Komnenos Palaiologos, a cousin of the ruling emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos

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M. Pichard (ed.), *Le roman de Callimaque et de Chrysorrhoé* (Paris 1956) (with French trans.)

C. Cupane (ed.), *Romanzi cavallereschi bizantini: Callimaco e Crisorroe, Beltandro e Crisanza, Storia di Achille, Florio e Plaziaflore, Storia di Apollonio di Tiro, Favola consolatoria sulla Cattiva e la Buona Sorte* (Turin 1995), 47–213 (revised version of Kriaras 1955 with Italian trans.).

Tale of Achilles – also *Achilleid* (Mid-Fourteenth Century)[8]

D. C. Hesseling (ed.), *L'Achilleide byzantine publiée avec une introduction, des observations et un index* (Amsterdam 1919) (**N** and **L**).

O. L. Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Version of the Achilleid* (Copenhagen 1990) (**O**).[9]

P. A. Agapitos, "Η χρονολογική ἀκολουθία τῶν μυθιστορημάτων *Καλλίμαχος*, Βέλθανδρος καὶ *Λίβιστρος*", in *Ἀρχὲς τῆς νεοελληνικῆς λογοτεχνίας. Πρακτικὰ τοῦ δευτέρου διεθνοῦς συνεδρίου Neograeca Medii Aevi (Βενετία 1991)*, ed. N. M. Panagiotakis, 2 vols. (Venice 1993) vol. II, 197–234.

P. A. Agapitos, 'Genre, Structure and Poetics in the Byzantine Vernacular Romances of Love' [SO debate], *Symbolae Osloenses* 79 (2004): 7–101.

P. A. Agapitos, 'In Rhomaian, Frankish and Persian Lands: Fiction and Fictionality in Byzantium', in *Medieval Narrative Between History and Fiction: From the Centre to the Periphery of Europe, c. 1100–1400*, ed. P. A. Agapitos and L. B. Mortensen. (Copenhagen 2012) 235–367.

R. Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance*, 2nd edn, revised and expanded. (London and New York 1996).

C. Cupane (ed.), *Romanzi cavallereschi bizantini: Callimaco e Crisorroe, Beltandro e Crisanza, Storia di Achille, Florio e Plaziaflore, Storia di Apollonio di Tiro, Favola consolatoria sulla Cattiva e la Buona Sorte* (Turin 1995), 324–442 (revised version of Hesseling 1919 with Italian trans.).

R. Lavagnini, 'Tales of the Trojan War: Achilles and Paris in Medieval Greek Literature', in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. C. Cupane and B. Krönung. (Leiden and Boston 2016). 234–59.

O. L. Smith (ed.), *The Byzantine Achilleid: The Naples Version. Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary by Ole L. Smith; Edited and Prepared for Publication by P. A. Agapitos and K. Hult* (Vienna 1999) 13–74 (**N**).

(1282–1328). For a recent discussion, see Cupane 2016: 95–7. See also Chapter 3 in the present volume.

[8] Dating according to Agapitos 2004, following Smith 1999. For a brief discussion of manuscripts and a detailed summary of the plot, see Lavagnini 2016: 240–4.

[9] Revised version (without critical apparatus) reprinted in Smith 1999: 155–76.

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Apollonios of Tyre – also *The Story of Long-Suffering Apollonios of Tyre* (Mid-Fourteenth Century)[10]

A. Janssen (ed.), *Narratio neogreca Apollonii Tyrii*. Diss Nijmegen 1954 (with Latin trans.).

C. Cupane (ed.), *Romanzi cavallereschi bizantini: Callimaco e Crisorroe, Beltandro e Crisanza, Storia di Achille, Florio e Plaziaflore, Storia di Apollonio di Tiro, Favola consolatoria sulla Cattiva e la Buona Sorte* (Turin 1995), 567–633 (revised version of Janssen 1954 with Italian trans.)

G. Kechagioglou (ed.), *Απολλώνιος της Τύρου. Υστερομεσαιωνικές και νεότερες ελληνικές μορφές. Κριτική έκδοση με εισαγωγές, σχόλια, πίνακες λέξεων–γλωσσάρια και επίμετρα* (Thessaloniki 2004).

F. Rizzo Nervo, 'Le versioni greche medievali dell' Apollonio di Tiro', in *Seminario l'Apollonio di Tiro nelle letterature euroasiatiche dal Tardo-antico al Medioevo*, ed. F. Beggiato and S. Marinetti. (Soveria Mannelli 2002) 151–66.

Florios and Platziaflore (Second Half of Fourteenth Century)[11]

D. C. Hesseling (ed.), *Le roman de Phlorios et de Platzia Phlore* (Amsterdam 1917) (**L**).

E. Kriaras (ed.), *Βυζαντινὰ ἱπποτικὰ μυθιστορήματα* (Athens 1955), 141–96 (**V** and **L**).

A. di Benedetto Zimbone 'Ancora su Florios e Platziaflore: un esempio di edizione', in *Ενθύμησις Ν.Μ. Παναγιωτάκη*, ed. S. Kaklamanis and A. Markopoulos-Mavromatis. (Irakleio, 2000) 269–90.

C. Cupane (ed.), *Romanzi cavallereschi bizantini: Callimaco e Crisorroe, Beltandro e Crisanza, Storia di Achille, Florio e Plaziaflore, Storia di Apollonio di Tiro, Favola consolatoria sulla Cattiva e la Buona Sorte* (Turin 1995), 464–565 (revised version of Hesseling 1917 with Italian trans.).

F. J. Ortolá Salas and Florio y Platzia Flora (eds.), *Una novela bizantina de época paleóloga* (Madrid 1998) ('mixed' edition with Spanish trans.).[12]

Tale of Troy – also *Byzantine Iliad* (Late Fourteenth–Early Fifteenth Centuries)[13]

L. Nørgaard and O. L. Smith (eds.), *A Byzantine Iliad: The Text of Par. Suppl. Gr. 926* (Copenhagen 1975).

[10] Dating according to Rizzo Nervo 2002 and Kechagioglou 2004. On the many versions in different languages of this text, see Chapter 6 in the present volume.

[11] Dating according to Agapitos 2004: 13.

[12] On the problems of 'mixed' editions such as Kriaras and Ortolá Salas, see Agapitos 2004: 13, n. 14, referring (for the specific case of Florios and Platziaflora) to di Benedetto Zimbone 2000.

[13] Dating according to Agapitos 2004: 13. For a detailed summary of the plot, see Lavagnini 2016: 246–8.

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Alexander and Semiramis **(First Half of Fifteenth Century)**[14]

U. Moennig (ed.), *Die Erzählung von Alexander und Semiramis* (Berlin and New York 2004) (**B** and **S** with German trans. of **B**).

Old Knight **(First Half of Fifteenth Century)**

P. Breillat (ed.), 'La Table Ronde en Orient. Le poème grec du Vieux Chevalier', *Mélanges d'archéologie et histoire* 55 (1938): 308–40.
F. Rizzo Nervo (ed.), *Il Vecchio Cavaliere* (Soveria Mannelli 2000).
R. H. Martin (trans.), 'Palamides, and Other Knights of the Round Table, in *The Tristan Legend: Texts from Northern and Eastern Europe in Modern English Translation*, ed. J. Hill. (Leeds 1977), 30–46.
A. Goldwyn, 'Arthur in the East: Cross-Cultural Translations of Arthurian Romance in Greek and Hebrew, Including a New Translation of Ὁ Πρέσβυς Ἱππότης (The Old Knight)', *LATCH* 5 (2012): 75–105.

Imperios and Margarona **(Mid-Fifteenth Century)**[15]

W. Wagner (ed.), *Histoire de Imbérios et Margarona: Imitation grecque du roman français Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne. Publiée pour la première fois d'après un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque Impériale de Vienne* (Paris 1874) (**V**).
S. P. Lambros (ed.), *Collection de romans grecs en langue vulgaire et en vers* (Paris 1880), 239–88 (**O**).
Jeffreys, E. and M. Jeffreys, 1971. '*Imberios and Margarona*: The Manuscripts, Sources and Edition of a Byzantine Verse Romance', *Byzantion* 41: 122–60.
E. Kriaras (ed.), *Βυζαντινὰ ἱπποτικὰ μυθιστορήματα* (Athens 1955), 215–49 (unrhymed version).[16]
K. Yiavis (ed.), *Imperios and Margarona: The Rhymed Version* (Athens, in press).

Teseida **– also *The Marriage of Theseus and Aemilia* (Late Fifteenth Century)**[17]

E. Follieri (ed.), *Il Teseida Neogreco. Libro I. Saggio di edizione* (Athens and Rome 1959) (partial edition).

[14] Dating according to Agapitos 2004: 13. [15] Dating according to Agapitos 2004: 13.
[16] Problematic 'mixed' edition of several versions and fragments; see Agapitos 2004: 13, n. 17. On the complex textual situation, see Jeffreys and Jeffreys 1971. See also Chapter 5 in the present volume.
[17] According to Agapitos 2004: 14, the Greek *Teseida* is 'barely connected to the Byzantine tradition' and probably catered to a Greek audience in Italy. The *Teseida* was one of the few vernacular Greek texts to be printed in Renaissance Venice; see Kaklamanis 1997.

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S. Kaklamanis, 'Ἀπὸ τὸ χειρόγραφο στο ἔντυπο Θησέος και γάμοι τῆς Αἰμίλιας', *Thesaurismata* 27 (1997): 147–223.
B. Olsen (ed.), 'The Greek Translation of Boccaccio's *Theseid* Book 6', *Classica et Mediaevalia* 41 (1990): 275–301 (partial edition).

In addition to this more or less stable core of twelve Palaiologan romances, some other texts that are more loosely connected to the corpus are discussed in the present volume and therefore deserve to be mentioned and listed here. One is the *Digenis Akritis* (ed. Jeffreys 1998), previously dated to the twelfth century and by Beaton referred to as a 'proto-romance', but here treated as narratologically and thematically related to the Palaiologan romances, at least in its version **G** (dated to the late thirteenth or even fourteenth century). Another is the *Alexander Romance*, the immensely popular fictional biography that survives in numerous versions and translations from late antiquity onwards.[18] Usually treated very differently in scholarship, the different versions among the varied manuscripts may be said to straddle the learned and vernacular traditions, representing an impressively long span of storytelling. Frequently mentioned in several chapters in the present volume and often referenced in the discussion of the Palaiologan romances more generally are also the four Komnenian novels, which therefore deserve to be listed below. Finally, two allegorical poems are often mentioned in relation to the romances: the anonymous *Consolatory Fable about Bad and Good Fortune*, probably from the first half of the fourteenth century and written in the vernacular register, and the *Verses on chastity* by Meliteniotes, composed in learned Greek in the middle of the same century. Our first list may then be complemented with the following.

Komnenian Novels (Twelfth Century)[19]

F. Conca (ed.), *Il romanzo bizantino del XII secolo. Teodoro Prodromo, Niceta Eugeniano, Eustazio Macrembolita, Constantino Manasse* (Turin 1994).
E. Jeffreys (trans.), *Four Byzantine Novels: Theodore Prodromos, Rhodanthe and Dosikles; Eumathios Makrembolites, Hysmine and Hysminias; Constantine Manasses, Aristandros and Kallithea; Niketas Eugenianos, Drosilla and Charikles* (Liverpool 2012).
'Byzantine Romances: Eastern or Western?', in *Renaissance Encounters: Greek East and Latin West*, ed. M. Brownlee and D. Gondicas. (Princeton 2013) 221–37.

[18] For editions and details of the many versions, not included in the above list, see Chapter 10 in the present volume.
[19] For the sake of convenience, only the Conca edition is included here. For other editions and issues of dating, see Jeffreys 2012. On the Komnenian novels, see also above, n. 11.

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Digenis Akritis **(Twelfth Century/Version G of Thirteenth–Fourteenth Centuries)**[20]

E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Digenis Akritis. The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge 1998).

Consolatory Fable about Bad and Good Fortune **(First Half of Fourteenth Century)**

S. P. Lambros (ed.), *Collection de romans grecs en langue vulgaire et en vers* (Paris 1880), 289–311 (**O**).
S. P. Lambros (ed.), 'Λόγος παρηγορητικὸς περὶ Δυστυχίας κατὰ κώδικα τῆς Λειψίας', *Neos Hellenomnemon* 3 (1906): 407–432δ [*sic*] (**L**).
C. Cupane (ed.), *Romanzi cavallereschi bizantini: Callimaco e Crisorroe, Beltandro e Crisanza, Storia di Achille, Florio e Plaziaflore, Storia di Apollonio di Tiro, Favola consolatoria sulla Cattiva e la Buona Sorte* (Turin 1995), 635–91 (revised version of Lambros 1906 with Italian trans.).

Meliteniotes, *Verses on Chastity* (Mid-Fourteenth Century)[21]

P. Miller (ed.), 'Poëme allégorique de Meliténiote, publié d'après un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque Impériale', *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale et autres bibliothèques* 19.2 (1858): 1–138.
M. L. Dolezal and M. Mavroudi (partial English trans.), 'Theodore Hyrtakenos' *Description of the Garden of St. Anna* and the Ekphrasis of Gardens', in *Byzantine Garden Culture*, ed. A. Littlewood, H. Maguire and J. Wolschke-Buhlman (Washington, DC 2002), 151–8.
S. Schönauer, *Untersuchungen zum Steinkatalog des Sophrosyne-Gedichts des Meliteniotes mit kritischer Edition der Verse 1107–1247*. (Wiesbaden 1996).

Many other texts from various stages of the Greek language, along with western and eastern romances, are mentioned in the course of the following chapters,[22] but we hope that this brief introduction to the most frequently discussed late Byzantine romances and related texts will help the reader to navigate both this volume and the secondary literature to which the respective chapters refer.

[20] On the dating of the manuscript and the potentially Palaiologan context of *Digenis*, see Chapters 9 and 11 in the present volume. Agapitos 2004: 14 excluded *Digenis* from his discussion due to the dating and to the secondary role of the love story in the overall plot.
[21] On the complex textual situation, see Schönauer 1996. For a recent and detailed discussion, see Cupane 2013: 84–90.
[22] In the following chapters, editions are indicated for all Byzantine and medieval texts, while more widely known Greek and Latin texts of the ancient tradition are expected to be easily located and available in various editions and translations.

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CHAPTER 1

An Introduction to the Palaiologan Romance
Narrating the Vernacular

Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson

> How, then, shall I write from the beginning and how shall I narrate | a narrative most beautiful, amorous, magnificent, | of how from the beginning that wondrous maiden, | that most outstanding and beautiful Margarona suffered, | and how the circular motion of years turned again? | Well, let me write and tell and narrate![1]

So begins the unrhymed version of *Imperios and Margarona*, with the narrator's query on how to tell his story. The Greek *Imperios and Margarona*, probably composed in the second half of the fifteenth century and often seen as the latest of the Byzantine romances, is an adaptation of the French prose romance *Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne*, composed some decades earlier, but as noted by Panagiotis Agapitos in his discussion of this particular passage, the French original has no such prologue. The author of the Greek version accordingly 'decided to include a prologue in the Byzantine tradition, just as he turned the late medieval French prose into Byzantine verse'.[2] In doing so, he drew on the prologues of two earlier Byzantine romances: the *Tale of Achilles* and *Velthandros and Chrysantza*.[3] By contrast, the translator of another French romance, Benoît de Sainte-Maure's twelfth-century *Roman de Troie*, which was turned into the Greek *War of Troy* a century later and accordingly may be seen as one of the

[1] *Imberios and Margarona* **N**, 3–8: Καὶ πῶς *να* γράψω ἐκ τας ἀρχὰς και πῶς *να* τὸ ἀφηγήσω, | ἀφήγησιν πανέμορφην, ἐρωτικήν, μεγάλην, | πῶς ἔπαθεν ἐκ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἡ θαυμαστὴ ἐκείνη, | ἐκείνη ἡ πανεξαίρετος ἡ ὡραία ἡ Μαργαρώνα, | καὶ πῶς τὸ κυκλοχρόνισμαν ἐγύρισεν αὐτίκα; | Λοιπόν, *να* γράψω καὶ *να* εἰπῶ καὶ *να* τὸ ἀφηγοῦμαι. Text and trans. cited from Agapitos 2012: 319. This unrhymed Naples **N** redaction, preserved in Neapol. gr. III-B-27, remains unpublished. On the five different versions of *Imperios and Margarona*, see Agapitos 2012: 318, n. 304. On the same romance, see also Chapter 5 in the present volume.

[2] Agapitos 2012: 319. On prologues and epilogues of Byzantine novels and romances, see also Cupane 2013: 76–84.

[3] Agapitos 2012: 319–20. The *Tale of Achilles* **N** has been preserved in the same manuscript as *Imberios and Margarona* **N**; see Agapitos 2012: 318, n. 306; for a description of the manuscript, see Smith 1999: 1–5.

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earliest of the Byzantine romances,[4] included no prologue, in spite of all other translators into European languages doing so. It seems almost as if no such readers' instructions on the work's intentions and usefulness were needed when the Trojan story was returned to its originally Greek context – or perhaps the translator wanted the readers to determine such things for themselves. At the same time, the Greek-speaking audience of the thirteenth century was obviously far removed both linguistically and culturally from the original audience of the Homeric epics.[5]

This situation illustrates well the kind of issues we are facing when entering the world of the late Byzantine romance: the relation between 'originals' and 'translations' or 'adaptations', the relation between Byzantine and western traditions, linguistic and cultural transfer, as well as questions of narrative, rhetoric and aesthetics – how to narrate a story in a manner that pleases the audience. These latter concerns may be seen as central to any work of literature, but the particular position of the late Byzantine romance – between the learned and the 'popular', the East and the West – necessitated certain narratological choices that may not have been as central to earlier Byzantine storytellers. The authors of the learned novels of the twelfth century, for instance, relied much more on the ancient novelistic tradition and wrote primarily for a limited and highly educated audience in the courtly circles of Constantinople.[6] The authors of the later romances, by contrast, have a much less explicit debt to the classical heritage; as this volume shows, allusions, type scenes and plot motifs were drawn from the ancient sources, but the learned citations and other direct markers are not evident. The narratological choices of the authors of the later romances could include prologues of the kind cited above, preparing the audience for what kind of story to expect, but also the handling of time, the representation of a suitable storyworld and the construction of characters.[7] While both the so-called Komnenian novels (twelfth century) and the Palaiologan romances (thirteenth to fifteenth centuries) could be seen as part of the same Byzantine romance tradition, they differ not only as regards form and

[4] For a detailed discussion of the dating of the *War of Troy*, see Chapter 8 in the present volume. For its inclusions among the romances, see further below.

[5] On linguistic and cultural concerns in the *War of Troy*, see Chapters 7 and 12 in the present volume.

[6] On the audience and context of the twelfth-century novels, see Burton 2008 and Roilos 2016. For a general introduction to the twelfth-century novels, see Nilsson 2016. See also below, n. 11.

[7] On the audience of the late Byzantine romances, see Cupane 2016b; Agapitos 2012: 296–330, along with his afterword in the present volume (Chapter 15). See also Agapitos 2012: 285–95 on four types of settings that mark the storyworld of Palaiologan romances (and accordingly also characterization): occidentalism, historicism, antiquarianism and utopianism. Cf. Cupane 2013 and 2014.

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audience, but also as regards overall plot structures.[8] Carolina Cupane has defined this narratological difference between the novel and the romance in terms of the focus on 'adventure' (*avanture*) versus 'love' (*amour*) in the plots, arguing that the learned novels contain no quest of adventure, presenting the protagonists as passive, whereas the quest for adventure is introduced at the beginning of the vernacular romances but then dropped in favour of passivity.[9] The romances, however, are much more than just love stories; indeed, these texts (like the Komnenian novels) are a product of their time: a time of shifting geographic borders, changing cultural and social mores – particularly around issues of gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity – and deepening cultural and political interaction with neighbouring cultures. Thus, as much as they are stories marked by the aesthetic 'sweetness' and 'charm' that Walter Pater identifies as the primary importance of their western counterparts,[10] careful readings of the texts reveals a window into the Zeitgeist of late Byzantium.

In the present volume we have chosen to focus on the Palaiologan romances, even if the relation to the Komnenian novels is seen as highly relevant for our scholarly understanding of the later romances. While the novels have been receiving an increasing interest over the past decades, partly because of their close affinity with the ancient Greek novels, the Byzantine romances have not received as much detailed treatment.[11] This volume is accordingly an attempt to offer an overview not only of the texts

[8] The terms 'Komnenian' and 'Palaiologan' derive from the imperial dynasties of the time and carry no ideological implications as such when used in this volume. On the Komnenian novels as a significant part of twelfth-century literature, see Nilsson 2014. The terms 'novel' and 'romance' are used throughout this volume in order to distinguish the twelfth-century texts (with a close relation to the ancient novels) from the later romances (related rather to the western romance of chivalry). Cf. Beaton 1996, who referred to both groups as 'romance'.

[9] This is a somewhat simplified summary of Cupane's careful analysis, which includes also the western romances, in which Cupane identifies a balance between the quest for adventure and the role of love in this quest; the Palaiologan romances thus represent a sort of mixture between the Komnenian and the western. See Cupane 1986 and 1999; cf. Agapitos 2004: 27–8 and the following analysis, in which he defines Komnenian novels as 'erotic dramas' and Palaiologan romances as 'erotic tales' (esp. 50–1). See also Agapitos 1991 for a narratological analysis of three of the Palaiologan romances.

[10] As, for instance, 'Here and there, under rare and happy conditions, in pointed architecture, in the doctrines of romantic love, in the poetry of Provence, the rude strength of the Middle Ages turns to sweetness; and the taste for sweetness generated there becomes the seed of the classical revival in it, prompting it constantly to seek after the springs of perfect sweetness in the Hellenic world' (1873: 2).

[11] On the Komnenian novels, see e.g. Beaton 1996: 9–88, esp. 70–88, Jeffreys 1998, Agapitos and Reinsch 2000, Nilsson 2001 and 2016, Roilos 2005. The English translation of all four Komnenian novels by Jeffreys 2012 has been very helpful in making them available to a larger audience, as has the edition and Italian translation by Conca 1994. For a recent volume that includes both the Komnenian novels and the Palaiologan romances within the frame of a larger Eastern Mediterranean tradition, see Cupane and Krönung 2016.

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themselves and their research history, but also to point out new directions and trends in the study of the late Byzantine romances, both in relation to the Greek tradition and in relation to the western romances. Standing at a critical juncture in the history of Greek language, literature, culture and politics, the romances demonstrate, from a historical perspective, Byzantium's position at the crossroads between East and West; it was the centre of important intercultural exchange among European, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean peoples. From a linguistic perspective, the romances represent a turning point in the history of the Greek language: they are often considered the earliest works of the modern Greek language and a repository of both oral storytelling and the multilingual Byzantine environment. This particular position in the history of Greek literature and language has also influenced the reception of the romances: they were not included in the Renaissance editions of Greek texts and remained more or less forgotten until they were picked up by nineteenth-century philologists, whose interest in these works was less for their literary merits than their historical and linguistic ones.[12]

Several scholars have contributed to the rise in the study of romances over the last few decades, and the already mentioned Cupane and Agapitos should certainly be seen as leading in that development. Working on both learned and vernacular literature, as well as both western and eastern romances, Cupane and Agapitos have been able to bring out both the similarities and the differences between the various traditions, underlining the need for a wide and encompassing study of romance literature. Building on the foundational work of Cupane and other scholars, Roderick Beaton's *Medieval Greek Romance* (1989, revised in 1996) proved to be a seminal work in the field, establishing a canon whose centre and periphery are still being debated. Beaton outlined the evolution of the genre from its roots in the ancient Greek novel (first centuries CE), its so-called revival in the twelfth century and, eventually, its flowering under the Palaiologan dynasty.[13] Three years after Beaton's book, Agapitos and Ole Smith published their sharply critical book-length response to Beaton, *The Study of Medieval Greek Romance* (1992).[14] The friction between these two

[12] Cupane 2016a: 119–20. For a history of the study of vernacular romance, focusing on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Agapitos 2004: 9–12. See also below, n. 22.

[13] Beaton 1996.

[14] Agapitos and Smith 1992. This study was in turn reviewed by, among others, Kechayoglou 1994. Beaton also offered a response to various reviews in the Afterword to his 2nd edition; Beaton 1996: 207–27.

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volumes energized a generation's worth of scholarship, leading to insights which bore directly on the romances themselves on issues such as date and place of composition, chains of influence and formal elements of oral and literary composition as well as larger aspects of Byzantine literature and culture, such as issues of cultural contact between Byzantium and its eastern European and western Asian neighbours, gender relations, martial ideology and contributions to Byzantine editorial and manuscript practices. This decade of growth in the field culminated in an article written by Agapitos and followed by several responses under the title 'Genre, structure and poetics in the Byzantine vernacular romances of love' (2004). The so-called 'SO debate', named after the journal in which it appeared (*Symbolae Osloensis*) analysed the genre from a variety of then current theoretical and critical approaches.[15]

Since then, the study of the late Byzantine romance has been concerned with several major debates, and the chapters in this volume attempt to both engage with these debates and identify new avenues for future investigation. Perhaps chief among these debates is the question of cultural exchange between the Byzantines and the neighbouring countries East and West. These questions have recently been the subject of comparative study,[16] and also bear upon related questions of composition and aesthetics such as tradition versus innovation and linguistic and generic debates about translation and intertextuality. Among Beaton's principal goals for the *Medieval Greek Romance* was to establish the generic and compositional categories under which each individual work in the genre could be classified. Thus, though the Komnenian novels in his scheme are walled off temporally from the romances of the Palaiologan period, their inclusion in the volume emphasizes the genetic similarities between them, specifically the ways in which all the texts reinstantiate the marriage plot among young aristocrats. And yet, the Komnenian novels were written in a learned atticizing register that recalled the ancient Greek novels. The romances of the Palaiologan period, by contrast, were written in the vernacular and in different verse and metre; perhaps more importantly, the storyworlds in which they are set draw on the fictional imaginations of the neighbouring cultures of Europe and the Mediterranean, that is, not principally from the earlier Greek but from cultural contacts beyond

[15] Agapitos 2004, with responses by Carolina Cupane, Martin Hinterberger, Elizabeth Jeffreys, Marc Lauxtermann, Ulrich Moennig, Ingela Nilsson, Paolo Odorico and Eustratios Papaioannou.

[16] See esp. Agapitos 2012; Moore 2014;Yiavis 2014 and 2016; Cupane and Krönung 2016.

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Byzantium – Latins, Turks and Persians. Beaton then separates those works he considers 'originals' from those he considers 'translations and adaptations'.[17]

Beaton's articulation of the canon thus offers a clean taxonomy for distinguishing among the various works in the corpus; indeed, he rightly argues that 'no literary text is produced or written in a vacuum, and one of the tasks facing the historian of literature is to disentangle the networks of relationships which combined to establish a framework for the new literary text at the time when it was introduced'.[18] The *Medieval Greek Romance*, therefore, remains indispensable in establishing a canon and in demarcating the principal means of differentiating the various species of work within the broader family. And yet no attempt at categorization, however necessary and valuable, is without problematic instances that transgress those borders. Indeed, one of the principal critiques of Beaton by Agapitos and Smith is the rigidity of the boundaries and the ways in which they oversimplify the constellation of similarities and differences – in tone, in subject matter, in poetics, in source, etc. – that define them. Suggesting a revision of what they call Beaton's 'tripartite division of genetic development',[19] for instance, they propose more amorphous means of intertextuality in addition to the more identifiable models of allusion and citation: 'a common ground of training' that gave authors a catalogue of widely shared metaphors (the example they offer is the figure of Eros). Similarly, they challenge Beaton's assumptions that the genealogy of translated texts is easier than the so-called originals,[20] since 'the analysis of the "translated" romances has not so far conclusively proven how this translation question was handled'.[21]

The questions of how to understand the enforcement and transgression of this genetic model informs the first chapters of the volume. In 'The Categories of "Originals" and "Adaptations" in Late Byzantine Romance: A Reassessment', Kostas Yiavis (Chapter 2) offers a new way of thinking about the divide between the 'original' romances and the so-called translations. Yiavis argues against 'originality' as a sufficient category for vernacular Byzantine literature, suggesting instead that medieval writers were configured to apply themselves to authorities, and writers addressing more demanding audiences 'authorized' and 're-authorized' sources even when writing 'original' works. Both translations and 'original' romances, then,

[17] Beaton 1996: 146. [18] Beaton 1996: 146; see further for his discussion of intertextuality.
[19] Agapitos and Smith 1992: 75. [20] Agapitos and Smith 1992: 75.
[21] Agapitos and Smith 1992: 75.

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used the same narrative strategies of appropriating and exploiting type scenes, archetypical characters and narrative patterns, yet did so in a manner that called attention to translation and originality in ways contingent not upon abstract conceptions of genre (as Beaton might have it) but depending on the political and aesthetic contexts of the authors' literary purposes. As a result, Yiavis argues, there is no vernacular Byzantine 'translation' which is not a free adaptation which resets its original.

The theoretical discussion outlined by Yiavis is complemented in Chapter 3, by Carolina Cupane's 'Intercultural Encounters in the Late Byzantine Vernacular Romance'. Cupane analyses the twelfth-century Old French romance *Partonopeu de Blois*, which tells the story of how the eponymous hero reached Constantinople with the aid of the magic skills of the empress Melior and won her in marriage – thus realizing the union between East and West under French domination – to demonstrate the ways in which the story spread throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. While the versions in Dutch, German, Middle English, Italian, Spanish, Catalan and Old Norse represent more modern notions of translation as adhering to word-for-word fidelity, its passage into Greek is evident in ways that, though perhaps more oblique or indirect, nevertheless suggest a certain kind of intertextuality. Cupane's discussion of the ways in which similar story patterns and imagery can be seen in both *Partonopeu de Blois* and Palaiologan romances such as *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* offers a method for suggesting cross-cultural and interlinguistic contact in the absence of philological proof. From a broader perspective, Cupane challenges the concept of generic hybridity, which assumes *a priori* iterations of pure exempla; rather, she suggests, stock motifs and genres show the seamless transportability of such conventions among folk tales, romances and related narrative forms.

The ensuing chapters similarly engage in comparative East–West analyses of the romances, though from perspectives yet different still. Efthymia Priki's 'Dreams and Female Initiation in *Livistros and Rhodamne* and *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*' uses a combination of Proppian narratology and anthropological initiation theory to explore the kinds of indirect cultural transfer suggested by Cupane. The first part of *Livistros and Rhodamne* and Book 1 of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* both explore how the male protagonists undergo a process of initiation in the mysteries of love, preparing them for their union with the women they desire. Dreams provide the necessary ritual spaces where these initiation processes can be accomplished, but they also perform a mediating function in the relationship of the protagonist couples. Even though they belong to

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two different historical and sociocultural contexts, the two texts present striking similarities in the initiation processes of their male and female protagonists.

Romina Luzi's 'The Acculturation of the French Romance *Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne* in the Byzantine *Imperios and Margarona*' (Chapter 5) furthers the exploration of the blurry boundary between translation and adaptation. Luzi argues that the deep similarities at the level of plot evince the Greek author's deep familiarity with the French work, and yet, he does not adhere to a fidelity model of translation. Rather, Luzi argues that the mechanics of the text's transmission can best be understood as a form of aesthetic and ideological translation, that is, a process of domestication by which a foreign work is made familiar to its new audience at the levels of plot, characterization and theme. The Greek work, therefore, is neither an adaptation nor an original in the modern sense of those terms, and thus Luzi's chapter exemplifies the ways in which Byzantine writers sought to make works considered too removed from the Byzantine literary canon more amenable to an audience with tastes other than those of the readership of the French romances.

Francesca Rizzo Nervo's 'Chronotopes between East and West in *Apollonios of Tyre*' (Chapter 6) adds to this discussion by offering a Bakhtinian analysis of another story that moved easily across cultural, linguistic and temporal boundaries. The story of Apollonios of Tyre, though based on a now lost ancient Greek source, was translated into Latin and its vernaculars and then again back into Greek. In each of the various retellings of the same fundamental plot – perhaps even drawn from the same Latin translation of the ancient Greek novel – not only language was translated, but rhetoric, style and genre as well. Thus, Rizzo Nervo argues, the story adopts a chronotope familiar to hagiographical writing when rendered in Greek, a moralizing discourse on Fate in Italian and an epic-romance in French.

While the chapters by Cupane, Priki, Luzi and Rizzo Nervo all focus on both direct and indirect forms of literary borrowing between East and West at levels such as plot, aesthetics and theme, Theodore Markopoulos's exploration of intercultural exchange focuses on linguistics. In 'Linguistic Contacts in the Late Byzantine Romances: Where Cultural Influence Meets Language Interference' (Chapter 7), he explores the *War of Troy*, a thirteenth-century translation of Benoît de Sainte-Maure's twelfth-century *Roman de Troie* to demonstrate how, under the Palaiologan dynasty, a number of works of western origin were translated into Greek. Like the *Apollonios of Tyre*, the *War of Troy* exists in complicated relation

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to its western source material. But where Rizzo Nervo focuses on chronotopes, Markopoulos focuses on language. The status of the vernacular works as evidence of the everyday language of their time has often been disputed, and the *War of Troy* contains a most particular mixture of learned and vernacular elements, a fact which has remained largely ignored by linguists working on the history of Greek. Though this chapter is concerned primarily with the details of specific morphosyntactic properties of the *War of Troy* (verbal periphrases, participial forms and analytic adjectival comparatives), the conclusions it draws are accessible and far-reaching: it demonstrates the ways in which the source language (Old French), leaves visible traces at the linguistic level in the target language (medieval Greek). Not just the presence of French loanwords, but the frequency and variety of French grammatical and syntactical structures suggest the deep cultural and linguistic links which bound the languages and which also indicates the very different model of translation/adaptation employed in the case of the *War of Troy* as opposed to the other works addressed in the previous chapters.

Taken individually, the opening chapters address the multiplicity of ways in which cultural interaction manifests itself in specific iterations of East–West cultural exchange and the resulting aesthetic, ideological and generic manipulations that enable these works to be domesticated into new cultural, literary and political milieus. Taken as a whole, however, these chapters re-enforce the parameters of the debate established by Beaton – that is, they all seek, in one way or another, to answer questions about how the romances fit into or defy categories of original, adaptation and translation. Their lines of dissent follow from Agapitos and Smith's critique, arguing that the complex mechanisms of cultural and literary transfer belie seemingly easily delineated borders, and the evidence of these chapters seems to support such a reading. This blurring of boundaries, however, also has significance for the aesthetic and political positions of these works. Since the discovery of these works at the end of the nineteenth century, the late romances have often been seen through the lens of Greek nationalism.[22] In fact, Roderick Beaton groups them under the

[22] Not only the late vernacular romances were treated in this manner, but even more so *Digenis Akritis*, 'discovered' in 1868 and published in 1875 under the title 'épopée byzantine'. The diplomat, politician and folklorist Nikolaos Politis proclaimed the newly discovered *Digenis Akritis* 'the national epic of the modern Greeks' in a lecture of 1907, when the territorial struggles of the early twentieth century were just heating up; see Mackridge 2009: 202 and 284. On this issue in the case of the Palaiologan romances and Byzantine literature at large, see Agapitos 1992 and 2004: 9–10; Cupane 2016a: 119–209. See also below, n. 26.

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chapter heading 'The First "Modern Greek" Literature',[23] and while Agapitos and Smith take issue with many of the claims made in the chapter as a whole, they do not dispute the underlying assumption.

Given the importance of the romances to Greek nationalism, it follows that the distinction between original and translated romances would have important political ramifications; indeed the distinction is in large part a way of measuring which works are original and therefore hold greater political prestige, and which are translations and therefore less important to the formation of an autonomous modern Greek identity free of external influences. These distinctions, then, are as much questions of politics, nationhood and ideology as they are of aesthetic, genre or philology. The turn towards East–West literary relations, too, has its roots in a broader cultural turn away from traditional positivist philology and towards a postmodern subjectivity that prioritizes a certain kind of cosmopolitan ideal that favours an analysis of cultural difference. A studied consideration of the political and literary contexts within which the revival of these works took place in the early-twentieth-century Greek literary imagination and their reinterpretation from a transnational perspective in the last few decades is an important consideration which may be a profitable area for future study.

While the first six chapters of the present volume engage in the synchronic question of literary relations, of Byzantium's relationship with its neighbours, a second pressing question is the romances' status within the broader Greek tradition, both in diachronic terms – specifically the relation of the Palaiologan romances with antiquity – and as regards the relationship between the romances and related genres within the broader corpus of Byzantine literary production. In Chapter 8 'From Herakles to Erkoulios, or the Place of the *War of Troy* in the Late Byzantine Romance Movement', Elizabeth Jeffreys shows how the *War of Troy* is linguistically and narratologically related to the Palaiologan romances.[24] This text is not just a translation of a western source – and thus subject to a synchronic East–West paradigm of cultural exchange – but also an example of the appropriation of the ancient Greek literary inheritance by Byzantine writers. Though Greek writers in the Middle Ages had access to both Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as well as to a variety of learned commentaries, summaries and other Byzantine literature about the Trojan War, the author of the Greek *War of Troy* opted instead to import a French source – a decision, Jeffreys argues, that reflects the work's production in the mixed

[23] Beaton 1996: 91–100. [24] See also Chapter 12 in the present volume.

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Angevin–Byzantine political environment during the Frankish occupation of the Morea. Synchronic issues of translation and adaptation are thus intertwined with diachronic concerns of the Byzantine relation to its ancient Greek past.

While Jeffreys's analysis of the *War of Troy* demonstrates one way in which the classical Greek past came to be embodied in the Palaiologan romances, Adam Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson's 'Troy in Byzantine Romances: Homeric Reception in *Digenis Akritis*, the *Tale of Troy* and the *Tale of Achilles*' (Chapter 9) addresses two others. Like the *War of Troy*, the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy* domesticate Trojan War mythemes into the generic and aesthetic contexts of the romance. But unlike the *War of Troy*, they seem not to be drawing on any obvious ancient or contemporary sources, thus again challenging the notion of originality that underlies the readings of the earlier chapters of the volume. Examining the reception of Homer from another perspective, the chapter demonstrates how ancient Greek literature entered into the Byzantine romances via a variety of other methods – ranging from narratological structures and parallel rhetorical strategies to explicit comparisons of Digenis to his heroic antecedents in the *Trojan War* tradition – and were domesticated from the context of ancient epic to that of the late medieval Greek romance. The chapter also makes an implicit case for the inclusion of *Digenis Akritis* among the Palaiologan romances, a position at odds with previous assessments of the work's place in the history of medieval Greek literature. This chapter argues that, often dated to the earlier tradition, the earliest extant manuscript – rather firmly dated to the Palaiologan period – represents a kind of adaptation of its own: from earlier Byzantine oral folk aesthetics and genre conventions into those of the late romance.[25]

Corinne Jouanno's 'Herodotean Material in a Late Version of the *Alexander Romance*' (Chapter 10) details the ways that a late Byzantine (fifteenth-century) version of the romance interpolated various ancient and medieval sources to alter both its plot and its value as an exemplum. For instance, an episode that appears in the surviving Greek version and its Slavonic source (and therefore must have been part of the lost original text) shows Alexander inspecting his troops and suddenly seized by a melancholy crisis while thinking how short-lived he and his men are fated to be. This episode is in fact a rewriting of a Herodotean anecdote which involved Xerxes, and Jouanno's analysis, as in the previous chapter, again challenges the long-held idea of a clear separation between educated

[25] For a similar approach, see Chapter 11 in the present volume.

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literature and literature in the vernacular. Agapitos has pointed out the problem of this separation several times,[26] and these chapters show that a facility with ancient authors such as Herodotus and Homer transcends what is a distinction over-emphasized in some modern taxonomies; these analyses show how that the fixed and rigid separation between learned and vernacular literatures is much more porous than the current state of research might suggest, especially since vernacular literatures of the period are realized through an engagement with the authoritative sources of the classical past.

In the chapter 'The Palaiologan Hagiographies: Saints Without Romance' (Chapter 11), Charis Messis challenges previous ideas about the place of romance within the broader currents of Greek literature through a reconsideration of the relationship between the two genres. Messis's analysis argues that scholars too often identify shared narratological constructions (that is, plot patterns and type scenes) as aspects of generic affiliation, suggesting, for instance, that there exists some element properly of romance that has been incorporated as a foreign body into a hagiographical text or that an element properly hagiographical has been imported into romance. What a study of these genres through a deep diachronic frame shows, however, is that a variety of narrative strategies and patterns are simply shared from antiquity and do not inherently belong to one genre or another. Rigid classifications among Byzantine genres turns out to be as misleading a way of thinking about literature as maintaining similarly artificial barriers between translations and originals or between learned or vernacular registers. While these binaries have productively shaped much of the scholarship in preceding decades, it is rapidly becoming clear that their status as entrenched truisms threatens to obscure more than it illuminates.

If the preceding chapters sought to recast long-standing debates in new ways, the final chapters of the volume can be said to reflect what is perhaps the biggest change in cultural studies and the humanities since the debate between Beaton and Agapitos and Smith in the early 1990s, that is to say, the widespread acceptance of literary theory, particularly post-structuralist

[26] See e.g. Agapitos 2004: 15 ('Once the false dichotomy between the "two" Byzantine literatures has been abandoned, broader and more detailed comparisons can be conducted with the remaining of vernacular and learned texts of the Palaiologan period, as well as with the erotic novels of the Komnenian era'). See also Agapitos 1992 and 2012: 245 ('The marked division between a supposedly learned and a supposedly vernacular Greek language is a sixteenth-century humanist construct, fully developed and ideologically bolstered by amateur scholars in the late eighteenth century and professional philologists in the nineteenth').

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theory and deconstruction. Thus, Stavroula Constantinou's 'Homosocial Desire in the *War of Troy*: Between (Wo)men' (Chapter 12) draws from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's seminal 1985 *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* to examine the ways in which the insights of gender studies and queer theory – discourses which have already become essential tools for critical analysis elsewhere in medieval studies and the humanities more generally – can be brought to bear in Byzantine studies. Constantinou discusses the ways in which gendered power dynamics inform the construction of same and opposite-sex social bonds, particularly with regard to the ways in which they police the boundaries and expression of sexual desire. The homosocial model she adopts represents one iteration of this gender trouble, that is, how men sublimate their sexual desire for other men by trafficking in their female relatives. She argues, for instance, that the *War of Troy* – the masculine romance par excellence of the Palaiologan period – can be better understood only if its male worlds are taken into consideration. The kidnappings of Hesione, Helen, Briseis and Polyxena thus become the indirect manifestations of love and revenge plots among male heroes who are otherwise unable to engage with one another directly; women's sexual autonomy is instrumental, subjugated to the social and ideological needs of men.

Kirsty Stewart's 'Literary Landscapes in the Palaiologan Romances: An Ecocritical Approach' (Chapter 13) brings into Byzantine studies another yet more recent manifestation of the poststructuralist turn that, as part of broader movements within the environmental humanities, seeks to understand the literary construction of medieval environmental ideology and, as importantly, the way the perpetuation of such ideologies continue to manifest itself in the modern era.[27] Through analyses of *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, *Livistros and Rhodamne* and the *Tale of Achilles*, Stewart demonstrates the ways in which human interactions with the landscape – thus plot and character – are shaped by environmental and gendered ideologies. In doing so, she offers a theoretical approach to the literary construction of environmental ideology between the Palaiologan romances and earlier Greek imaginative fiction (e.g. the ancient and Komnenian novel) as well as some from romances from the western courtly milieu and the Perso-Arabic tradition.

The following chapter, Megan Moore's 'The Affective Community of Romance: Love, Privilege and the Erotics of Death in the Mediterranean' (Chapter 14), uses another recent post-structuralist paradigm, that of affect

[27] See Goldwyn (2018) for a book-length analysis of the subject.

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theory, to explore comparative approaches to grief and death in both the Byzantine and western medieval traditions of romance. Through readings of sea travel, Moore demonstrates how the emotional community permitted by Mediterranean voyage both draws from the past and spills over into the late medieval period, echoed for example in the example of *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*. These echoes resonate precisely because together they create an emotional community that both reinforces and explains a model of noble love steeped in death through links to Mediterranean literary motifs, inviting us to reconsider our traditional approach to reading love in medieval romance. This chapter thus not only offers a new understanding of medieval emotional communities, it also invites readers to consider the functioning of the Palaiologan romance in a larger cultural, historical and intertextual context. Furthermore, it invites scholars interested in affect studies to consider both class and cultural context as fundamental to the framing of emotion, rather than insisting that emotions be uniquely considered within either one temporal or geographic framework.

Looking back at the important studies that have been published in the last couple of decades, and not least Agapitos's article on 'fiction and fictionality in Byzantium and beyond', along with Cupane's interesting response to it,[28] demonstrates aptly that Agapitos and Smith were wrong in a significant part of their critique of Beaton's *The Medieval Greek Romance*. One of the main points seems to have been that Beaton's book was somehow premature; it was written even though a number of editions and preliminary studies were still lacking. Without that necessary foundation, Agapitos and Smith argued, it was impossible to draw any conclusions of the kind that Beaton did.[29] Looking at that argument in hindsight, and perhaps especially in view of Agapitos' own comparative study of fiction in the eastern and the western, Byzantine and Persian tradition, where all pieces are certainly not yet in place (if they ever will be), it seems that we have simply moved on to a different way of approaching these texts. Indeed, in years that have passed since the debate between Beaton and Agapitos and Smith, and certainly since the SO debate, both traditional philology and contemporary literary theory have offered a variety of new and innovative ways to understand the study of literary texts; concurrent advances in Byzantine and Greek studies have similarly reoriented scholarly attitudes to the material and the culture in which it was produced.

While each chapter in this volume sheds light on some aspect of the specific text or texts under analysis, the collection as a whole seeks to

[28] Agapitos 2012 and Cupane 2013. [29] Agapitos and Smith 1992. Cf. Kechayoglou 1994.

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reframe two debates that have remained central to the study of this corpus. First, synchronic analysis suggests that the fixed boundaries between translation/adaptation/original are not clear-cut, and that such distinctions perhaps say more about political considerations regarding the autonomy of Greek identity and language or its dependency on cross-cultural interaction than they do about the texts themselves. The influence of cultures West and East shaped the Byzantine romances at the levels of genre, narratology, even morphology. Second, diachronic studies reframe the discussion of so-called generic hybridity and the place of the romances within larger debates of learned and unlearned literary registers. Thus, the present volume demonstrates that the narratological and rhetorical strategies of the hagiographers and romance writers were not borrowings from one another, but were perhaps the result of a shared literary inheritance. Indeed, borrowings from ancient sources such as Homer and Herodotus prove that even the writers of romance were able to participate in the learned discourses of educated Byzantine culture.

Lastly, a principal goal of the volume is not simply to offer new ways of thinking about the problems of the past, but to lay out new avenues for future research. Chief among these is a repositioning of Byzantium not as the East in the conventional East–West formulation (which sees the 'Latins' as the West), but as the West in an East–West formulation that acknowledges East Europe and Asia (including the Middle East) as important sources for Byzantine literature and romance in general. Though Agapitos, Cupane and others have already addressed this, it remains perhaps the most promising avenue for future research on the romances, with possible implications not just for this genre or literature as a whole, but for Byzantium's place in a multipolar rather than a binary world. A second promising avenue for future research lies in accommodating the post-structuralist theories – gender and queer theory, ecocriticism, postcolonial and affect theory – that have invigorated much of the study of the western Middle Ages in recent years within Byzantine contexts. The concluding chapters of this volume offer a sampling of the ways in which theory can be fruitfully applied to not just the romances but Byzantine literature as a whole. Such advances would have the added benefit of putting Byzantine studies in easier dialogue with other western medieval literatures – and in this regard it is promising that the recent volume edited by Cupane and Bettina Krönung includes both eastern and western perspectives.[30]

[30] Cupane and Krönung 2016. One should also note that Agapitos 2012 was published in a volume on medieval, not specifically Byzantine literature.

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Though we ask and answer these questions from a decidedly modern and academic position, they were also at the core of many debates in the Palaiologan period itself. In imagining a literary day in the life of Demetrios Kydones (1324–97), a prominent Byzantine politician, epistolographer and man of letters, Panagiotis Agapitos demonstrates in his fictional afterword 'The Bookseller's Parrot' (Chapter 15) that the Byzantines themselves were variously troubled, delighted, perplexed and charmed by these new stories; Agapitos asks us to consider them from the perspective of their original readership, to consider them not just as historical documents for philological study, but to appreciate them for what they are: tales that, even five centuries later, rank among the most sophisticated and imaginative works produced during the Byzantine millennium.

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CHAPTER 2

The Categories of 'Originals' and 'Adaptations' in Late Byzantine Romance
A Reassessment

Kostas Yiavis

Some of the fundamental surveys of the medieval Greek vernacular romance peg their analysis on the categorical divide between 'originals' and 'translations'.[1] There have been other approaches which set criteria different from the genealogy of the romances.[2] Nevertheless, the former opinion still influences how most researchers continue to perceive the field, and defines how the vernacular romances are taught in classrooms. The distinction between 'originals' and 'translations' helped scholars enormously while they were mapping out the romances in the late nineteenth century, when the study of vernacular Byzantine literature commenced in earnest, and throughout the twentieth. Indeed there is something solid and commonsensical about dividing the romances into the 'originals' (*Livistros and Rhodamne*, *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy*),[3] which were based on freshly conceived stories with no apparent immediate source, and the 'translations' (*War of Troy*, *Florios and Platziaflora*, *Imperios and Margarona*, *Apollonios of Tyre*, the *Teseida*, the *Old Knight* and *Alexander and Semiramis*) which drew, in one form or another, on a known literary exemplar in another language.

Let us leave aside the fact that we are now becoming increasingly aware that the romances with more obvious debts to non-Greek sources are without exception free renditions boldly resetting their sources, never faithful translations, and should be properly termed 'adaptations'.[4] The present chapter would like, first, to pick a hole in the separation of the 'originals' from the 'adaptations' in the belief that this dissociation hobbles our effort to appreciate the importance of the vernacular

[1] Krumbacher 1897: 844–72; Beck 1971: 117–47; Beaton 1996: 117–45.
[2] See Dimaras 1949: 24–37; Politis 1978: 32–41; Vitti 1978: 31–5.
[3] For a list of editions, here and later, see the primary sources of the bibliography.
[4] See Yiavis 2016.

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romances. The other aim of this essay is to challenge 'originality' as a sufficient category for late Byzantine vernacular literature. Medieval writers were configured to apply themselves to authorities, and writers 'authorized' and 're-authorized' sources even when writing 'original' works. Both adaptations and 'original' romances, it will be argued, used the same narrative strategies of appropriating archetypes. The inquiry of this chapter will result in a proposal to recast the romances in terms of courtly literature (addressing demanding readers) and popular literature (addressing less demanding readers).

For a start, an inflexible division (originals–adaptations) is inadequate because it lumps together romances which are very disparate from each other. One would be rather hard pressed to find much shared between the *War of Troy*, an adaptation of Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie* with an unmistakably martial whiff, and the *Teseida*, an adaptation of the eponymous work by Boccaccio, which seems to be more akin to the urbanity of the 'originals' *Kallimachos* and *Velthandros*. Chronologically, too, it would be next to impossible to picture a cultural frame overarching the *War of Troy* (the earliest adaptation, recently dated to the thirteenth century), whose source was commissioned by Henry II of England, and *Apollonios* and *Imperios* whose later versions were produced in the sixteenth century in the form of popular printed chapbooks for a very general readership (and which kept being reproduced in inexpensive editions until the nineteenth century).[5] Surely, we should be able to assess each of the romances, irrespective of its origin, within its social and cultural setting, and not as part of an artificial group. It is unrealistic to think that anybody set about to produce an adaptation irrespective of the concerns and sensitivities which generated the rest of the literature of one's time.

Next, relying too comfortably on the split tends to obscure the overlap of 'originals' and adaptations which is as significant as it is uncharted. *Kallimachos*, to take an example, is a courtly poem, penned by a member of the Palaiologan imperial family, and, therefore, meant to be read by some of the most accomplished people in the Empire.[6] At the same time, the romance leans on the popular Byzantine tradition, comprising fictional saints' lives and folk poetry.[7] Conversely, the same demotic tradition of the

[5] For the dating of *War of Troy* between 1267 and 1281 see Jeffreys 2013: 235. See also Chapters 7, 8 and 12 in the present volume.

[6] Most scholars today accept that the author is Andronikos Komnenos Vranas Doukas Aggelos Palaiologos, nephew of the Emperor Mikhail VIII. The identification was made by Martini 1896: 464–5. See also Chapter 3 in the present volume.

[7] For the generic confluences of saints' lives and romances, see Chapter 11 in the present volume.

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nameless *Vitae* bears on *Florios*, a popular adaptation, which is otherwise modelled on a variation of a fantastically popular version of an originally courtly tale. To conclude that *Kallimachos* is an original and *Florios* is not does not take one very far. It is more useful to imagine how some of the courtly authors, such as Andronikos of *Kallimachos*, anonymously wrote vernacular literature by absorbing popular elements – perhaps in order to relax the constraints of learned rhetoric and social decorum.[8]

A third argument to support the idea that keeping the adaptations away from the 'originals' presents problems is that the division presupposes a hierarchy of literary merit whereby adaptations are by definition inferior to the 'real thing'. Sensitive critics have naturally tried to steer away from such prejudice, but the sting of suspicion is perennially present.[9] Of course, the assumed subservience of the adaptations is scarcely ascertained. Some of the adaptations, unlike some of the 'originals', can be shown to possess impressive aesthetic complexity, and deserve to be treated with the critical tools suitable for compelling literature. The 'original' *Tale of Troy*, for instance, is nowhere near as elegant and finely graded as the adaptation of the rhymed *Imperios*.

The Vernacular Romances as Literary Criticism

A further reason, which this writer would like to emphasize, why the conversation on the vernacular romances will be enhanced if the two sets are studied *in tandem* is that together they effectuate the emergence of the vernacular into literary self-consciousness. All the romances written from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries developed the technical and conceptual vocabulary that allowed the new literary idiom to evolve from what it used to have been in the twelfth century (i.e. a budding experiment in the hands of courtiers such as Theodoros Prodromos and Michael Glykas; and an effortless expression of folk culture as captured in *Digenis Akritis*) into a self-aware literary language which was confidently creative within various cultural contexts and in line with the needs of various new audiences. More specifically, both categories together, first, fabricated the literary language in which they were being written; second, they constructed their own writers' status; and, third, they took a decisive step towards a secular perspective in literature.

[8] Messis and Papaioannou 2013 traced similar moments of liberation in anonymous *Vitae*. On anonymity as a discursive mode, see Papaioannou 2014.

[9] See Beaton 1996: 117–34. On the 'polyphony' of the learned Byzantine production, see Roilos 2005. See also Nilsson 2014.

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Start with the language. It is easy to forget today, reading the romances in the twenty-first century, that their writers found themselves on extremely thin ice. The new vernacular was lacking the literary tradition and the *auctoritas* which all medieval writers needed to fall back on so as to validate their work. There could have been no medieval writing without exploitation of texts established by readers' recognition. The writers of the Greek vernacular romances were essentially medieval – at the same time, and this is no contradiction, as the vernacular itself was a conspicuous chapter of innovation and modernity. Linguistically as well, the literary vernacular of the twelfth century distanced itself from the official language that was principally an updated atticizing koine, ultimately originating in late antiquity, which extended into somewhat simpler administrative and academic varieties.[10] To the educated elites the new language must have sounded like a bold concession to the lower social registers and folk taste. Some of the earliest sustained attempts to write literature in the vernacular happened at (or close to) the imperial court in Constantinople, and had the distinct aura of breaking with propriety: the vernacular was either meant to be provocative, or it was written by somebody who was brazen enough to get into hot water with the law for taking the emperor to task.[11] As a matter of fact, many of the romances were written by the fifteenth century, a period which reverberated with the Hesychast heresy. Although the connection between the appearance of the vernacular and heresy has not been explored yet, it does not seem unthinkable to suggest that the romances challenged the reading culture of the Church, not least because they turned out a space for creativity incompatible with the conventions of the Church.[12]

No revolutionary moment, however, is entirely novel. As Byzantine romance writers were writing in a new language and, thus, breaking with tradition, they clung to the most medieval of self-authorizing techniques – allusion to textual authorities. Only this time it was not the sanctified authorities of patristic literature and the classics but other vernacular texts,

[10] Horrocks 2010: 213.

[11] For Theodoros Prodromos's use of the vernacular in some of his poems in order to surprise his courtly addressees and induce them to assist him financially and in other ways, see Beck 1971: 103 and 104. For Michael Glykas – who was imprisoned, blinded and banished for criticizing the Emperor – see Kazhdan and Epstein 1985: 161.

[12] Cf. the interesting comments by Papaioannou 2014: 35, n. 47, who believes (and cites bibliography) that in the mid-Byzantine years the Church viewed with suspicion anonymous hagiographies, which it connected with heresy and excessive indulgence in the fantastic. See also Beaton 1996: 63 and 96 for the tantalizing hint that both Prodromos and Glykas came close to being seen as heretics.

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such as they existed, and other 'modern' literature available, be it Greek or non-Greek, western or eastern. The romances, whether 'originals' or adaptations, which were written for less sophisticated audiences had relatively more restricted access to the learned tradition. The romances designed for more demanding readerships were more at liberty to refer to the learned tradition which included the romances written in the high-register language of the twelfth century. All romances extensively merged contemporary vernacular texts (Greek or foreign, learned, popular, courtly or more general) which were inaugurating themselves in the consciousness of readers. By referring to the vernacular literature as it was being written, both 'originals' and adaptations manufactured an authority out of the newly minted literary idiom. In effect, they valorized the new language.

Students of Byzantine vernacular literature never cease to be amazed by the volume of internal connections among the romances. Even the so-called 'originals' were essentially textual adaptations. They combined, blended, paraphrased and alluded to earlier sources. Scholarship has already demonstrated that *Livistros* borrowed the central *katabasis* episode from *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, and the important exchange of letters between the main pair of lovers from the Byzantine epistolary tradition.[13] The sorceress in *Kallimachos* was not original at all but rather drawn from *Livistros*.[14] *Velthandros* replicated the structure of *Kallimachos*,[15] and might have combed through the western courtly tradition for attractive motifs,[16] assuming its author did not comprehensively borrow the setting from the Persian romantic chronicle *Haft Paykar* by Niẓāmī Ganjavī.[17] The *Tale of Troy* was a retelling of Paris's adventures which cobbled together material from popular romances and chronicles.[18] The pseudo-historical *Story of Belisarios* was inspired by the *Tale of Achilles* in a number of lines.[19] This list is far from exhaustive.

The reason for this textual composedness is the constitutional reliance of medieval writing on authorities. Writers meant their readers to enjoy allusions to other texts. The ablest among them manipulated these references and inserted meaningful margins between their own work and the older tradition, and so they articulated their own views. Equally importantly, relating to authorities was the indispensable way for those medieval (vernacular and learned) writers to deliver their thoughts. Medieval authors

[13] See Moennig 2014: 166–9 and Agapitos 2006: 130–3 and 133, n. 31. [14] Cupane 2014: 195.
[15] Beaton 1996: 121. [16] Cupane 1978. [17] Yiavis 2014.
[18] Nørgaard and Smith 1975: 13.
[19] Bakker and van Gemert 2007: 76. For the proposal to include *Belisarios* among the vernacular romances, see Moennig 1999: 3.

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programmatically found their voices by drawing on well-established precedents. The example of the account of the god of Love in two of the 'originals', *Livistros* and *Velthandros*, is serviceable. In order that both writers could represent Eros as a powerful, and somewhat haughty, king, they had little choice but to express themselves in the terms set by the analogous presentation by Eustathios Makrembolites in his canonical *Hysmine and Hysminias*.[20] We should understand the vernacular romances as a metonymic culture, in which a new text was understandable (i.e. written and read) within a polyvocal, open-ended network of significations connecting it with other texts. The genealogy of the 'originals' is, thankfully for literary critics, as rich and complex as those of the adaptations. In a very important sense, the 'originals' are not original at all because they used the same narrative techniques of adaptation as the adaptations. It would be absurd to question their originality overall, and yet it is clear that we should qualify this 'originality' since the 'originals' are the products of adaptation themselves.

This 'un-original' compositeness is by no means exclusive to the late Byzantine vernacular romances. It is certainly descriptive of the romances written in the learned language of the twelfth century, which, in turn, are contingent on the Greek novels of late antiquity.[21] Prodromos's *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* compounded two oracle scenes from Heliodoros's *An Ethiopian Story*.[22] Makrembolites's *Hysmine* took in Plato and Achilles Tatius on the description of cities and gardens.[23] Eugenianos's *Drosilla and Charikles* borrowed generously from the *Greek Anthology*.[24] Even *Digenis Akritis*, the folk heroic poem of the twelfth century, was a combination of folk tradition and the ancient novels.[25]

Inquiry of the integral interconnectedness of literature is by no means new to Byzantinists. Readers of Photios and Psellos have known that the pair were aware of copious amounts of internal references among the ancient novels.[26] The seminal study remains that by Herbert Hunger who in 1969 explained the mechanism of Byzantine 'mimesis', as he called it. Byzantine teachers of rhetoric, Hunger showed, prescribed a set of textual authorities. Not only did one have to know by heart one's Homer, Thucydides, some of the tragedies and a selection of patristic works, Hunger continued, one was also encouraged to quote or allude to,

[20] The similarities were noticed by Beaton 1996: 155–8 and Cupane 2014: 192.
[21] For a list of similarities, see Hunger 1978: 123–5. [22] Agapitos 2006: 144.
[23] Agapitos 2006: 136, n. 45. [24] Hunger 1969/70: 37–8. [25] Beaton 1995: 83.
[26] See Agapitos 1998: 131, more recently reconfirmed by Nilsson 2010: 199.

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in fact one *had to* quote or allude to these revered authors if one wanted to relate anything at all.[27] An excellent example is quoted by Cyril Mango who, unlike Hunger, castigated Byzantine 'imitation' in no uncertain terms. Niketas Magistros, the ninth/tenth-century historian, in order to describe his joy at feasting his eyes on a church on the island of Paros, borrowed his exclamatory phrases (and scarcely can one be more impromptu than that) from Achilles Tatius.[28] That is, experience clearly mattered less than textual authority as a source of knowledge.

Byzantine writers were taught to rearrange their authorities to make them tally with their artistic ambition. In case they addressed more demanding audiences, the sophistication of allusions heightened. Perhaps the best example here is the often-quoted *Christos Paschon*, a cento, probably of the twelfth century, on the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. Almost one-third of its 2,610 lines are verbatim quotations from Attic tragedies, mainly Euripides' *Medea* and *Bacchae*. The anonymous writer (at some point it was suggested that he was none other than Gregory of Nazianzus) derived the ready-made verses from pagan drama if only to deny their initial purpose by Christianizing them.[29]

Nor was this exploitation of tradition limited to Byzantine letters: the majority of western writers from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries envisaged themselves as standing within a chain of authorities which they had to make new and then pass on.[30] Reverence for *auctoritas* was enormous, even when some writers introduced their own twist. When Benoît decided to diverge from Homer, he fabricated a story of discovering a theretofore unknown book which reliably used other 'truer' sources than Homer – namely, Dares and Dictys. Naturally, Benoît produced a totally different book than either.[31] Chrétien de Troyes employed the stuff of Arthurian folk legends only to refashion it into the epitome of the courtly thought-world. Geoffrey Chaucer in his *House of Fame* (a dream vision usually dated to 1379–80) alluded to Dante, mainly, but was also able to keep a notably ironic distance from the *Divina comedia*. It is impossible to value medieval writing without understanding that medieval writers brought authorities to bear, whether to quote or recalibrate them.

[27] Hunger 1969/70: 19–22. [28] Mango 1975: 7–8.

[29] Hunger 1969/70: 34–6; Kazhdan 1995: 2–3 and Browning 1995: 22. See also the comments in Cameron 2014: 22–3.

[30] For some of the ideas in this paragraph, I am indebted to the analysis in Brownlee et al. 2005, esp. 424 and 428–31.

[31] See Yiavis 2016: 130–1 and Windeatt 1992: 44 and 78–9.

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As opposed to medievalists who are more accustomed to this norm, students of Byzantine vernacular romance who often come from Modern Greek Studies have been less prepared to take account of the intrinsic constructedness of late medieval (and early modern) literature – and the fascinating possibilities it presents to literary criticism. The multitude of references was often seen as a problem, not an interpretive opportunity. The powerful debates that dominated the field in the 1970s and 1980s, and are still thought-provoking, attempted to explain the large amount of shared lines and expressions among the romances either as derivatives from colloquial, oral language or as results of plagiarism due to the writers' deficient talents. Roderick Beaton in his admirably concise summary of the debate incredulously cited a chart displaying the impossibly convoluted connections among the vernacular romances.[32] The chart looks mind-bogglingly labyrinthine indeed, although at the same time it is faultlessly accurate.

All those internal connections among the romances do exist because, first, the vernacular writers had to import from the oral language forms and types (such as the colloquial μικροί τε καὶ μεγάλοι, μετὰ μεγάλης δόξης, ὡς ἔπρεπεν ἀξίως, ἐν μία τῶν ἡμερῶν, εἰς τὸ παλάτιν μέσα and many more) in order to prop metrically their lines, and because it was easier to revert to clichés (as it always has been).[33] The second reason, which has been overlooked so far, is that the romance writers, as all medieval writers, had to authorize their own work by referring to other works. What is a novelty in this case is that by doing so the vernacular writers also authorized the fledgling vernacular idiom. When the adapter of *Florios* (dated loosely to the fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries) needed a speech of fatherly advice upon his hero leaving home, he availed himself of an exhortation in the *Spaneas* (twelfth century), a text already fairly popular with vernacular readers, if its 'echo' by Marinos Falieros, *Logoi didaktikoi* (written after 1421) is anything to go by. By making his advice resemble the earlier poems, the *Florios* adapter acquired legitimacy for his poem, and, in effect, sanctioned the capacity of vernacular literature to function as an authority.[34]

Writing as a textual (and often generic) mélange was a key narrative mode of the long Middle Ages which comprised the period during which the Byzantine vernacular romances were composed. Sometimes this

[32] Beaton 1996: 164–81, esp. 168. [33] See the classic article Jeffreys 1973.
[34] Compare *Spaneas* 239–40 (Anagnostopoulos) with *Logoi didaktikoi* 48, 54, 55 (W. F. Bakker and A. F. van Germert), and *Florios* 1123–4 (Cupane).

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amalgamation was aesthetically successful. In his understated and coy way, the adapter of *Imperios* intimated his hero's erotic passion for his long-lost bride by making the hero fall into sleep in a beautiful meadow upon remembering his wife. This was not an original invention on the part of the poet at all but a topos in medieval literature: solitary sleep while one is reflecting on one's beloved was a metaphor for sexual desire.[35] Absorptions were less successful artistically in other cases, as frequently in the *Tale of Troy*. At any rate, we can be confident that the phenomenon was the rule and that it happened irrespectively of whether a romance was 'original' or an adaptation.[36]

Not Quite Intertextuality

Scholarship continues to unearth prodigious quantities of references to, analogies with and stark imitations of works plucked from the western, the eastern and the Greek traditions. Discoveries will inevitably proceed undiminished in the future. We should draw special attention to the fact that in the Middle Ages there were intense cultural exchanges: good stories circulated even orally, even over linguistic divides, and writers felt justified in incorporating whatever they thought was authoritative. It would be a mistake to assign these 'free-floating elements' shared by the romances to their writers' deficiency. It is also important that we do not identify the constitutional interconnectivity of medieval literature with intertextuality.

Intertextuality is a master moment in writing in which authors position themselves and their responsibilities in relation to their sources as they attempt to form their text by dint of another text; sometimes authors even attempt to form other texts by dint of their own. Intertextuality presupposes writers' awareness that they refer to a source or a tradition in order to achieve aesthetic effects. It is better comprehended, in the Middle Ages as later, as part of the elaborate techniques of personal poetry. Intertextuality, for instance, is when the poet of *Kallimachos* utilized with panache the genre of dream visions (which were extremely popular

[35] For similar metaphors of sleep, see *Alexander and Semiramis* B.1217–18 (Moenning) of the fourteenth century and the Persian *Haft Paykar* 15.42 of the twelfth. For an English translation of the latter, see Wilson 1924 (trans. of *Haft Paykar*), 57.

[36] Moennig 1999: 5 was the first to question the wisdom of dividing the vernacular romances into 'originals' and 'translations', but his reasons were different from this chapter: he identified structural discrepancies among the 'originals' which made it difficult to classify them in one group. In *Alexander and Semiramis* 41–2 and 43 (Moenning), Moennig explained what he called 'integration of material' in Byzantine romance as part of the evolution of conventions over time.

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throughout European literature at the time). His audience was supremely refined: they were expected to recognize the intertextual allusions to the literary tradition, and also, perhaps, how the poet revisited it.

This is not quite what happened with the more demotic (i.e. culturally demotic) writers of the vernacular romances, whether 'originals' or adaptations, writing for a wider readership. Those writers could not but retain the extreme reverence for authorities but were less willing (perhaps, less qualified) to make intricate references to 'high-brow' works for readers who were less likely to enjoy them. Nonetheless, those writers carried on being accustomed to deriving their textual valence from literary *auctoritas*. As authority they perceived popular oral stories, colloquialisms, as well as the more popular ripples of learned literature. To define the difference between intertextuality and the medieval trust in literary authorities by way of examples, it is a conscious intertextual nod to the *Iliad* when Plutarch, in order to present a certain wife as superlatively faithful, quoted verbatim the Homeric lines where Andromache famously addresses Hector.[37] However, when the vernacular *Tale of Achilles* and *Semiramis* used lines with a similar ring, we cannot be positive that their writers were actually mindful of the fact that the idea originally came from Homer. It is just as probable that they were quoting a very widespread idea with currency in popular vernacular literature at the time that a husband is like a father and mother to his wife.[38]

A good case in point is *Imperios*. Dozens of allusions to literary works in at least half a dozen languages can be identified. There are traces of reads, popular tales and colloquial expressions with which the adapter amended his primary foreign source.[39] It is implausible that either the adapter of the unrhymed version (a popular adaptation) or the rhymester of the subsequent printed chapbook (a slim volume meant to be read widely and easily), who extended the former's references, could have afforded the time to consult physically all those texts hinted at. (It would not accord with what we know of the fast-pace production of the more popular branch of the later romances and the equally brisk operations of the Venetian printing houses where the rhymed *Imperios* was printed in 1543.) Instead,

[37] See Plutarch's 'Brutus', in *Lives* 23.5, trans. in Perrin 1918: 126–247. The reference to Homer is to the *Iliad* 6.429–30.

[38] See *Tale of Achilles* N 1268–9 (Smith); *Alexander and Semiramis* B.1177–9 (Moenning); rhymed *Imperios* 557–60 (Yiavis). Cf. also *Apollonios of Tyre* 379–80 (Kechagioglou) (rhymed *Apollonios*, 855–8). Related are *Rimada koris kai neou*, 63, 69 and *Erotokritos* E998.

[39] See 'Commentary' in *Imperios and Margarona*, pp. 275–437 (Yiavis). On *Imperios and Margarona* and its relation to the French model, see Chapter 5 in the present volume.

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we can be satisfied that the *Imperios* adapter and its rhymester had recourse to a (very large) number of borrowings from sources that had been established in the literary consciousness of their prospective general readers as 'authoritative'. The adaptor and the rhymester tuned their pitch, choosing freely from that range. A writer like that of *Imperios* may (or may not) have been aware of the origins of his allusions within such a wide literary network. He may (or may not) have intended his readers to recognize the allusions. And his readers may (or may not) have been able to recognize them in fact. The point to be made here is that the language of the late Byzantine vernacular romances could not but be quintessentially a bricolage.

It is conceivable, to put it differently, that in the more popular romances, references to personal literature were replaced by 'blind' references to an anonymous tradition, oral or written. Whether it was the literary consciousness of a sophisticated writer or the idiom of the more demotic works, the literary language of the vernacular romances was polyphony (what Hunger thought was 'imitation'). Both categories had to rely heavily on authorities. In both, their complex and variegated genealogy produced their particular generic poetic timbre. It worked as *cantus firmus* did in music: an expression made sense and became richer by corresponding to other expressions in other books. This quality was typically medieval, and it was principal in the 'originals' and the adaptations alike.

The Romances Assert Their Writers' Status

Besides validating the emergent vernacular and making use of the plurality of the literary language of the Middle Ages, the second important act which the vernacular romances, both 'originals' and adaptations, performed was to devise self-authorizing strategies for their writers. This might sound like a paradox since all the later romances are unsigned. They never professed prestige for themselves by drawing on their writers' identity as a source. Rarely did the romances elevate their own poets, their skills and interests, or other contemporary poets for that matter.[40] In fact, there was no substantial presence of the poet's persona whatsoever. Writers, even writing itself, were effaced: the fiction was often made, usually through

[40] For an intriguing case of the *Imperios* rhymester implying a startlingly exalted position for himself, see the note at *Imperios and Margarona* 1–12, pp. 275–7 (Yiavis). Stereotypical references to household names of ancient Greek authors were common but never evinced any actual knowledge of the authors' work: see, for example, *Tale of Achilles* N 1904–5 (Smith) and *Imperios* 74–5 (Kriaras).

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interpolated phrases (such as ἄκου, λέγω, δοκῶ etc.), that the romances were orally delivered, although they were very clearly designed to be read.[41] In other words, in the vernacular romances the author was hardly ever presented as a conspicuous authority.

And yet, the vernacular writers did introduce implications of self-worth. To this end, a primary technique was to present their books as *useful*. Some writers took it upon themselves to explicate to their public the new ways of an evolving world (such as guilt-free love and also, in more roundabout ways, luxury and social mobility). This was a development. It quite radically reconfigured literary authority: the vernacular romance broke away from the Byzantine tradition of the learned referentiality (and self-referentiality) of established personal writers. The homage painstakingly paid to the revered *auctores* of the past, hallowed by tradition, could now receive only lip service. A significant slice of authority was now appropriated by the vernacular writers (in effect, anyone wielding a *stylus*) who invented their own gravitas solely on the fact that they made fiction. In particular, they made useful and didactic fiction. It was not, however, the dreary moralizing didacticism that one found, for example, in *Logos paregoretikos*, a poem of the fourteenth century, whereby the argument was put forward, repeatedly, that all problems and concerns were pointless since all humans would die sooner or later. The later Byzantine romances echo with renewed vitality the ancient precept that literature should be *iucunda et idonea* ('pleasant and appropriate').[42]

The poet of *Livistros* α invited readers to make an example of an uncouth man (23: ἄγροικον) and his turnaround through love (21–4). The sensual and otherworldly *Kallimachos* laid on a lesson which reversed Boethius in that lovers should know that sorrow lurks in the sweetest pleasure (6 and 9–15). The *Tale of Achilles* winked at its readers while subscribing to the same view, and stayed, too, well away from sermonizing (1–20). The adapter of the unrhymed *Imperios* showed the capriciousness of Fortune (τὸ κυκλογύρισμα, l. 5 in manuscripts N, V and O), a theme also emphatically introduced by *Velthandros* (16–17). The adapter of *Teseida* (esp. the prologue, 89–109) portrayed the delicate psychology of a rejected lover who had no choice but to keep loving, and who attempted to rekindle his mistress's feelings with stories of devotion and chivalry. One poet, that of the *Old Knight*, as far as one can judge from the mutilated

[41] See Brownlee et al. 2005: 433. For a different opinion, see Agapitos 1991: 74–103.
[42] See Horace, *Ars poetica* 333–4.

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surviving manuscript, affirmed the right of literature to appear to have no other purpose than to relate a good yarn.

Such messages were never laboured and imposed upon the stories: they were promised at some point (usually in the prologues), but interpretation was almost always left open-ended – to the delight of future literary critics who will appraise, in time, the potential for multiple readings of these as-yet-not-sufficiently acknowledged gems. Again, the division between 'originals' and adaptations is unenlightening because the poets of both categories shared the claim to 'usefulness' as a method to construct their own generic status.

Translatio auctoritatis

By stamping authority for themselves, the vernacular romance writers wrenched it away from somewhere else. The third, and certainly not least, major development in the literary values of Greek romance in the years 1200–1600, is a *translatio auctoritatis*: the authority with which writers began to be invested was shifted from God, the ultimate cause of much of medieval literature.[43] Yet again, the change happened in works considered both 'originals' and adaptations, thus further destabilizing this categorization.

Medieval writers, both learned and popular, Byzantine and western, from scriptural exegetes to forensic orators to writers of popular romances and epics, were fond of ascribing all things that were worthwhile in their books to God. This was an elaborate way to establish a writer's authority since the other co-writer was none other than God himself, the supreme *causa efficiens*. Attribution of books to God generally waned in European literature after the fourteenth century as it was gradually superseded by the tendency of writers to give themselves credit for their works.[44] Interestingly, from the Greek vernacular romances only one, the rhymed version of *Imperios*, connected its writer with the Lord's will, and this was done so playfully and suavely that the feeling is far from overwhelmingly devout.[45] One cannot help wondering whether too close a connection with religion was a bit more than what vernacular romance, which could have been originally a dissension from established discourses as we saw earlier, was willing to take. A distance from religion is true even of the more popular romances which, one might suspect, would have been more prone to Faith.

[43] I am borrowing the term *translatio auctoritatis* from Minnis 2010: xxviii.
[44] See Minnis 2010: 160–5. See also Dunn 1994: 1–16, esp. 8–9.
[45] As in n. 40 above, see the comments on *Imperios and Margarona* 1–12, pp. 275–7 (Yiavis).

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Religion featured remarkably little in the Byzantine vernacular romances. Not a single one has a plot driving home a message convincingly and peculiarly conducive to Divine Providence. It is true that there are scattered references to God in many of them but hardly do such allusions substantially affect the development of action. In *Apollonios*, for example, the homiletic ending is rather a standard formula for the rhymester to round off the story, and its piety is scaled-down compared with other poetry of the time.[46] *Florios* has an ostensibly religious subject (the tension between a Christian and a Muslim family as their children fall in love) but its adapter was by far more interested in history than religion, and he, as a matter of fact, whittled down the religious references found in his Tuscan source.[47]

This secular turn is, of course, not confined to the vernacular romances. In Niketas Choniates's *Chronike Diegesis*, a history of the years 1128–1206, humans were shown to be the real agents of history, while their actions were punctuated by the odd providentialist formula.[48] Nor is it feasible to identify a moment in cultural history after which all religious feeling as represented in literature was entirely replaced by a worldly frame of mind. The passionately spiritual *The Sacrifice of Abraham* (*Ἡ Θυσία τοῦ Ἀβραάμ*), which survives in popular editions as from the early eighteenth century, is only one of a string of examples which attest to the fact that dividing the medieval from the early modern thought-world on the basis of religious fervour is not helpful.

In being disinclined to display robust piety, the new vernacular literature tacked from the preceding traditions in Greek. In both the ancient novels and the novels of the twelfth century, Eros had been typically a formidable God-like *tyrannos* to whom lovers had to capitulate. Submission to the powers-that-be resulted in characters, most of whom, albeit not all, were passive in the hands of Fate. It was only a short step away from political obsequiousness: this god occasionally assumed the attributes of Byzantine monarchy, as in Eugenianos's *Drosilla and Charikles* and in Makrembolites's *Hysmine and Hysminias*.[49] By contrast, the vernacular heroes, almost without exception, were active doers. They acted resolutely and attempted to rectify evils and wrongs. Perhaps more importantly, they did not hesitate to take issue with royal power. Often they collided with it; sometimes they proved their incompatibility with it. Prince Kallimachos set off to demonstrate his mettle in adventures in order that his father might prefer

[46] See *Apollonios King of Tyre* 2.2: 1774 (Kechagioglou).
[47] For the point, see Yiavis 2016: 146–7.
[48] See Kazhdan and Franklin 1984: 274.
[49] The similarity was first noted by Beaton 1996: 58.

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him rather than his brothers as heir. In the end, though, he became a recreant knight: he took to living with his lover in a paradisiacal castle and forgot all about kingship. Prince Florios travelled far and wide to save the girl, but he, supposedly a perfect knight, did not shy from trampling on chivalry when he castigated the one man he had to protect at all costs, the source of all power, his king and father. Prince Imperios, another apparent flower of knighthood, embarked on his exploits only when he needed to leave home after an argument with his father, and had trouble with persons in positions of power until the end. Apollonios, unthinkably for a good king in a courtly tale, gave up his kingdom when frightened off by a foe.

Regardless of whether they are 'original' or adaptations, some of the most interesting vernacular stories flouted staples of earlier romances. One such staple is deference to power, divine as well as civic. Along this process, types of protagonists developed into fuller characters, and the vernacular romances gained an unprecedented iconoclastic tinge.

A Modest Proposal

The usual nomenclature ('originals' – adaptations) can only go so far, then. It muddles other categories which have more promise, and makes us still think in terms of taxonomy whereas more 'molecular' analysis is necessary if we want to push further the study of the vernacular romances. One may think, for example, that understanding the romances in terms of 'courtly' (those which show a keener awareness of the culture of the court, its concerns and sensitivities, and are written for demanding readers who can appreciate a twist of conventions) and 'popular' (those intended for a more general public) can be a more useful distinction. There is more mileage in seeking to comprehend how the *Literatursprache* of the more culturally exclusive *Livistros*, *Kallimachos* and *Velthandros*, *Teseida* and the *Old Knight*, on the one hand, is different from (and what exactly it has in common with) that of the broader-based *Tale of Achilles*, *Tale of Troy*, *Florios*, *Imperios* and *Apollonios*, on the other. The *War of Troy* seems to occupy a middle space: it hails from a source which epitomizes courtly ideology at its peak while yet moving towards the demotic.[50]

Consider attitudes to morality, for example. The romances created for larger audiences tend to be more bashful. Love scenes are discreet and 'romantic'. When they happen outside marriage, the happy lovers, as a rule, eventually marry (as in the *Tale of Achilles* 1475–89 and *Florios*

[50] See Yiavis 2016: 131–3.

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1641–6b).[51] *Imperios* verifies that propriety mattered for vernacular readers: the romance was made much less earthy than any of its western variants. The Greek adapter excised all scenes such as the following:

> Et quant il avoit contemplé son plaisant visage et avisoit celle douce bouche, petite et vermeille, il ne se pouvoit saouler de la regarder. Et apres ne se put tenir de despoitriner sa gente poitrine qui estoit plus blanche que la neige, pour voir et taster ses plaisans mamelles. Et en faisant cela estoit si ravi en amours qu'il luy sembloit qu'il fust en paradis.
>
> And when he contemplated her beautiful face and saw her sweet mouth, small and bright red, he could not have enough of looking at her. And then he could not help uncovering her bosom which was whiter than snow, to see and taste her pleasant breast. And doing this, he was so happy with love, that it seemed to him he was in paradise.[52]

And he would not dare have the Greek Margarona ask Imperios to 'kepe [her] a virgyne' before she agreed to elope with him.[53] To take another example, in *Digenis Akritis* the only erotic scene outside marriage is a ritual rape resulting in brutal murder which brings on the hero's downfall. In *Apollonios* the single sexual relation consummated is incestuous and unambiguously lambasted.

As opposed to the prudishness of the more popular kind, the courtly romances indulged in long descriptions of uncomplicated enjoyment of out-of-wedlock love. *Kallimachos* treated readers to arguably one of the most elegantly hedonistic descriptions in all medieval literature in Europe. The hero was left stunned at the sight of the naked and bound heroine. The poet ingeniously managed to avoid giving a detail too many (449–69). Later, in the bath the knight massaged the lady's bruised body, as her young and beautiful lady servants joined in (771–806). Velthandros and Chrysantza made love so vigorously that they were left unconscious (864–8). They later had sex while the maid waited outside the room (1015). The three went for a walk in the gardens where the couple made out again (1017). In *Livistros*, prince Klitovon wooed, successfully, his cousin, a married woman (α 2755–74).

This sexual permissiveness was possible because the Byzantine courtly romance (like its western counterpart) was in a position to thematize the conflict between the romantic demands on the protagonists as lovers, and the demands on them as perfectly moral princes whose demeanour was

[51] Cupane 1994: col. 989, saw the lovemaking scenes of the vernacular romances as an evolution of motifs found in earlier romances.

[52] My translation. The French excerpt is from *La belle Maguelonne* 53 (Biedermann).

[53] As in the Middle English counterpart *Pierre of Provence and the Fair Maguelonne*.

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expected to be exemplary as a matter of course. The friction was lost on the more popular works which, nevertheless, had other means to discover their tone, not least the plurality of medieval literary language. It is the position of the present chapter that the field can now build on the critical editions, the linguistic analysis and the motif-research on which it has focused so far. We now need to reveal the literary complexity of the vernacular romances, and the ways in which it remains fascinating to this day. An interesting way to get on would be to understand how the romances exploited medieval literary discourses, and how they catalyzed future developments.[54]

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[54] I am grateful to Professor Ulrich Moennig for reading this chapter and offering excellent insight. I am also tremendously obliged to Dr Adam Goldwyn for supplying me with material to which I had no access.

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CHAPTER 3

Intercultural Encounters in the Late Byzantine Vernacular Romance

Carolina Cupane

In the Middle Ages as in ages before and after, the Mediterranean was the natural connector between the people and cultures around its shores, a great shared space in which a lively multicultural interchange of goods and luxury items took place. Due to historical contingencies, these contacts developed with variable intensity along maritime routes already established in antiquity. The frequency seems to have reached a peak in the tenth to fourteenth centuries.[1] The exchanged goods belonged, for the most part, to the realm of court cultures that extended far beyond the Mediterranean. Offered as gifts, captured as spoils or sold as trade goods, luxury objects travelled along pathways spanning Central and North Europe as well as Baghdad and even further Central Asia and China. This never-ending movement let a common visual language arise, which explains the similarities luxury objects often display, most notably regarding ornamental and iconographic features.[2] Artefacts and technology, however, were not the only goods that circulated across the Mediterranean: ports and marketplaces were transit points for cultural goods as well.[3] In these and in similar contact zones,[4] a lively exchange of ideas, narrative subjects, motifs and – more generally – knowledge developed beyond the great divides of language, ethnicity and religion.

Admittedly, this kind of mobility is far more difficult to identify, which partly explains (but does not justify) the lack of scholarly attention. To be sure, objects are concrete; they still exist and can therefore be touched with hands. The evidence they offer is tangible, whereas literary motifs are immaterial, unsteady entities. And yet, artefacts and narrative motifs,

[1] Cupane and Krönung 2016: 1–2. [2] Hoffmann 2001: 16 and 26; see also Grabar 1997.
[3] Schenda 1993: 71–82
[4] The term 'contact zones' was first coined by Pratt 1991, in the context of the kind of hybrid culture that originated in colonized countries under the pressure of a hegemonic culture. It has recently been used to design urban spaces (such as museums or schools), where people with different language and cultural background come together (Schorch 2013).

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whether written or oral, sometimes speak a similar language. What is more, visual culture often parallels the literary – whose reverse image it is – insofar as the literature stands behind the picture as its actual source of inspiration.[5]

In what follows, I will move from the assumption that a kind of reservoir of shared motifs freely circulating through time and space did exist during the Middle Ages,[6] and that they built, together with a few founding texts – some adventure and love tales as the *Alexander Romance* and *Floire et Blancheflor* or, more often, novelistic and sapiential literature like the books of *Kalila wa Dimna*, *Barlaam and Joasaph* and the *Sindibad* – a common narrative koine.[7] Both motifs and texts were usually reshaped according to local tastes and expectations, but they maintained their basic features, thus remaining recognizable to the receivers and to us now as well. But, whereas the texts, translated and adapted, were consigned to writing – which makes their itinerary from East to West (or, less frequently West to East) easier to reconstruct – narrative motifs were most often carried through the lively voice of numerous unknown senders. Spread through underground, twisty paths, they flew back and forth, merged with other themes and were inserted in new narrative contexts. As with folk tales, literary motifs, too, can move easily over time and space, handed down orally, without leaving any traces of the intermediate stages. That is the reason why they are difficult to detect and are very often overlooked or at least underestimated.

Within the connecting Mediterranean space, Byzantium, if only on account of its geographical position, always held a very special position. Not only did it function as a contact point and hub for all kinds of luxury goods (many of which self-produced), being itself at the same time the longed-for destination of countless travellers, merchants, adventurers,[8] it was also the distributor and, so to speak, recycler of exotic oriental narrative material forwarded to Western Europe. This is a strongly voiced opinion, and it is surely correct, but it is just one side of the coin, for literary transmission and reception are a two-way process: giver and receiver always interact with each other. To the steady stream of tales and motifs flowing westwards via Byzantium we have, therefore, to add the one flowing in the opposite direction.

[5] Walker 2011: 59–66. [6] On this, see Yiavis 2014: 41.

[7] The Iranologist Angelo Piemontese called these founding texts 'the shared library of the Middle Ages' (1999: 1–5).

[8] An overview on this topic covering the tenth to thirteenth centuries can be found in Ciggaar 1996.

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In late Byzantium, the road from West to East was extremely well frequented. This change of direction has to be related to the severe disruption of the balance of power among the different political players acting within the Mediterranean space from the thirteenth century onwards. Against the increasing political and economic role of various western potentates, first of all the Italian sea republics, Byzantium became more and more a junior partner whose very existence depended on western support.[9] It is certainly no coincidence that the number of marriage connections between Byzantium and the West greatly increased from the mid-twelfth century onwards.[10] Western princesses with their retinue shaped the atmosphere at the imperial court. Westerners settled with increasing frequency in Byzantium, and flooded the empire with arms and merchandise as well as books and tales.[11] Some of the books, such as the theological works of Thomas Aquinas and Augustine, or Ovid's poetic oeuvre, must have circulated in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Constantinople, where they were translated into the learned language of the Byzantine scholars who constituted their intended audience.[12] The milieu and aims of such translations are also well known, although it is hardly possible to identify either the specific manuscripts they are based on or the actual channels through which they were brought to Constantinople.

Greek Vernacular Narrative between Popular Tradition and Literary Exchange

By contrast, vernacular translations or, better, adaptations are a problem of their own. In most cases, we can only guess when and where the contact came about and who the audience was. I will not dwell on this topic; suffice it to say here that adaptations of foreign novels are generally thought to have been composed in no longer Byzantine areas such as Frankish Morea, Crete or Cyprus, and consequently they would have minor relevance for Byzantine literature proper. However, a reappraisal of the adapted romances is underway, with a new awareness of their cultural significance and relevance to Byzantine and early modern Greek

[9] Cupane and Krönung 2016: 11.
[10] On the topic, with focus on the Palaiologan epoch, see Origone 1996.
[11] On the Latin quarters in Constantinople, see Schreiner 1995 and 1997.
[12] An overview of the translations of Latin literature into Greek is Schmitt 1968 on Planudes's translation activity; on Ovid translations especially, see Fisher 2002–3; on Augustine, see Fisher 2011 and Maltese 2004; on Thomas Aquinas, see Plested 2012: 63–73.

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literature. The anonymous adapters seem to have chosen very popular and widespread tales originally written in French or Italian, which they freely and creatively rewrote in their familiar Greek vernacular by enriching them with motifs taken from the native oral tradition and from other literary genres. As Kostas Yiavis puts it, the adapted romances – such as the *War of Troy*, *Florios and Platziaflora*, *Imperios and Margarona*, *Apollonios of Tyre*, the *Old Knight* and the *Teseida* – 'were the main gateways for engaging with rich foreign traditions'.[13]

Of course, adaptations from western sources are not all that vernacular fiction has to offer. The so-called 'original' romances were most probably produced by educated authors in the Constantinopolitan court milieu towards the end of the thirteenth and in the fourteenth century. Although they are sometimes seen as purely Byzantine creations which can be explained by traditional literary categories,[14] they did certainly not remain unaffected by the increased inflow of tales and texts from abroad. On the contrary, works such as *Livistros and Rhodamne*, *Velthandros and Chrysantza* and *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* make extensive use of themes and images drawn from medieval French love allegory, first and foremost the idea of the judgement at the court of the ruler Eros, which they 'translate' into the iconographic language of imperial rhetoric.[15] That said, the most important influences certainly came from within, from the learned literary tradition. It is Herbert Hunger and, in more recent times, Panagiotis Agapitos who have mapped out the strong lines of continuity from the learned novel to the vernacular romances, and, more generally the impact of rhetorical training, as well as of Byzantine court realities on the latter, thus regaining them for Byzantine literature.[16]

In addition to the interplay between Byzantine and western literary culture, the influence of the Byzantine oral narrative tradition also has to be taken into account. Indeed, popular narrative, after having been systematically removed and silenced by the learned tradition, slowly began to find its voice from the twelfth century onward through the new linguistic medium of the vernacular. It makes its first appearance as an elusive

[13] See the persuasive plea of Yiavis 2016: 127.

[14] See the paradigmatic statement of Odorico 2005: 284 (my trans.): 'Byzantine romances of this period [i.e. the Palaiologan period] should be considered exclusively within the frame of Byzantium's own literature and society without falling back upon western influences which, if any, are surely not as strong as their own social and literary tradition.'

[15] I have already discussed this in details elsewhere; see e.g. Cupane 1973/4: 286–96 and Cupane 1992: 291–305.

[16] Hunger 1968; Agapitos 1990, 1991: 142–3, 205–13 and 323–7; Agapitos 2013: 399–416; see also Beck 1971: 117–35.

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shadow in the vernacular romances, and earlier scholars used it as a strong point for considering these works as pieces of unsophisticated, inferior literature spontaneously originating among the common people.[17] I will return to this in more detail below, but it is useful to make some preliminary considerations from the outset. Whereas the role of traditional Byzantine rhetorical schooling is palpable everywhere in the romances and can be clearly identified, the impact of a popular (and by definition oral) narrative tradition is more difficult to assess and even to define. The presence of fairy-tale material is noticeable everywhere; it can even be said to shape the characteristic atmosphere of the vernacular romances. But the existence of a rich stock of folk tales collected from mid-nineteenth century onwards[18] does not automatically allow us to infer that these tales already existed in the form they have today at the time of composition of the romances. In some cases the reverse situation seems to be equally possible, and even more probable.[19] Be that as it may, literary influences from within – and, I would add, abroad – were, in my opinion, stronger and more effective in the composition of vernacular romances than native folklore.

Having already questioned the 'Byzantinocentric' approach in the past,[20] I would like to provide here further arguments and make my point clearer by comparing two Byzantine vernacular romances with an old French tale. The texts in question have been chosen because of the common features they share. Despite their anonymity, all three works surely originated in a courtly milieu and were addressed to a courtly audience. The authors were undoubtedly men of letters, well aware of the learned culture of their time. Likewise, they were also acquainted with their own folkloric tradition. Furthermore, they also share some plot motifs suggesting direct contact. However, my aim is not so much to demonstrate the dependence of the later texts on the earlier ones, but rather to shed more light on the multiple ways in which reception functioned at the time and the subtle patterns it could display, beyond the obvious case of a recognized archetype.

My Byzantine texts are the tales of *Livistros and Rhodamne* and *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*. The western text is the romance of *Partonopeu de Blois*, which I shall also take as a point of departure for my discussion. Since *Partonopeu* is not very well known among Byzantinists, I will start

[17] See the overview of the scholarly research on this topic in Agapitos 1991: 7–14.
[18] On nature and typology of Modern Greek folk tales, see Meraklis 1993; see also Megas 1967a.
[19] See, for instance, the brilliant article by Reinsch 1986. [20] See above n. 15.

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with an introduction of this text and a summary of its plot,[21] before I move on to my comparative study.

Partonopeu de Blois

Little known today, probably as a result of the overwhelming celebrity of the great contemporary works of Chrétien de Troyes, *Partonopeu* was surely one of the most popular romances in the Middle Ages and for a long time after. It enjoyed great diffusion and was translated into several medieval vernaculars.[22] The anonymous author was active at the court of Blois and dedicated his work to a prince of this house (closely connected to the French royal house), most probably Count Thibaut V, whose wife Alix was a daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Louis VII of France.

The romance survives in seven complete manuscripts, three fragments and a number of extracts, probably from three more lost manuscripts, incorporated into two later texts. The story also exists in three different versions with two different final sequences, a short one (**A**) leading to a triple wedding and a long one (**V**) with a single wedding of the protagonist couple. **A** may well have been the earlier and original version. **V** was later extended and provided with a continuation (**B/T**) in which the hero had to face further hostilities from the rival he had already defeated and then killed in the first version. The possibility that part of this sequel might stem from the author himself or at least have been planned by him cannot be ruled out, for it is hinted at in the course of the main story.[23] Be that as it may, the continuation seems to be a composite product, written over time by many different authors. As for the chronology of the first version, it has been convincingly argued for a dating to the early 1170s.[24] *Partonopeu* would also precede *Cligès* (1176/7), thus introducing, along with *Eracle* by Gautier d'Arras, the fashion of the so-called Byzantine romances, and more generally, that 'vogue de l'orient' which would spread throughout Europe in the following decades.[25]

[21] In what follows I rely on Eley 2011: 1–19 and 218–28 (detailed summary).

[22] Adaptations are known in Middle Dutch, Middle High German, Middle English, Old Norse (Danish and Icelandic), Italian as well as Spanish and Catalan (both very late adaptations). On the particular features in some adaptations of the romance in various European languages, see Hanley, Longtin and Eley 2004; on the Icelandic versions, see particularly Rikhardsdóttir 2012: 113–63.

[23] See below, n. 95. [24] Eley and Simons 1999.

[25] See on this topic Gaullier-Bougassas 2003; with specific reference to *Partonopeu*, Bercovici-Huard 1982: 180–5; Gaullier-Bougassas 1999.

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Partonopeu's plot runs as follows. While hunting in the Ardennes forest, Partonopeu, the 13-year-old nephew of the French king, loses contact with his comrades, gets lost in the wilderness and, having spent an awful night in the woods, arrives at the seashore where a lavish unmanned ship lies at anchor. The ship transports him to a magnificent, yet apparently deserted city – the detailed description of which is clearly modelled on contemporary travellers' accounts of the wealth and treasures of Constantinople (most notably that by Odo of Deuil).[26] Fearing demonic forces, the hero seeks shelter in the city's finest palace. Inside, he is served dinner by invisible hands, then goes to the bedchamber and settles down for the night. Suddenly, an unknown woman gets into bed beside him and declares him an intruder, prompting him to depart immediately. Partonopeu refuses to go and pleads for mercy. In the darkness, the two young people soon come closer to each other and begin to explore each other's bodies. What follows has been described as one of the most erotically charged lovemaking scenes in medieval literature. The woman then reveals herself as Melior, the learned empress of Byzantium who is also a skilful magician. She declares to have chosen Partonopeu from among many because of his noble origins and beauty. Hence, she had deliberately lured him and brought him to her city, Chief d'Oire, by her magic skills in order to marry him. The wedding, however, will not be celebrated for two and a half years, until Partonopeu reaches the age to be knighted, at the time her vassals have appointed. In the meantime, he will enjoy Melior's love at night, but will not be allowed to see her. The days he will spend in royal style, by hunting and sightseeing, without being seen by or seeing anyone, in order to protect her honour. Otherwise, the magical skills she painstakingly learned would vanish forever.

After some time, Partonopeu gets homesick and visits Blois, where his mother, informed about his love story and its circumstances, urges him instead to make a suitable marriage, warning him against Melior, whom she declares to be a demon force. Back at Chief d'Oire, his curiosity about his beloved's appearance leads him to betray his promise. As a result, Melior loses her magic powers and Partonopeu is banished. In despair, the young man seeks death in the Ardennes forest, where Melior's sister Urraque discovers him and takes him with her to her estate of Salence, close to Chef d'Oire, falsely pretending that Melior has sent her to find

[26] Odo of Deuil, 62–6; on the impact of Constantinople's overwhelming wealth on the western crusaders, see Ciggaar 1996: 45–77; Macrides 2002; particularly on descriptions of the imperial palaces, see Schreiner 2006.

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him. She nurses Partonopeu back to health and provides him with fine armour in order to have him take part in the great three-day tournament arranged by Melior's barons to choose her husband. Together with his loyal friend Gaudin, whom he met in the forest on the way to Chief d'Oire, Partonopeu proves to be the best warrior by prevailing against all opponents, and particularly against the most frightening Persian sultan Margaris, whom he finally kills in single combat.

In what was probably the original (and shorter) version, the story (as it appears in **A**) closes with a long final sequence featuring a triple marriage (Partonopeu with Melior; Melior's sister Urraque with the French king, Lohier; and Gaudin with her lady-in-waiting, Persewis), followed by the coronation of the main bridal pair. In the long version, only the wedding of the protagonist pair is featured, while Partonopeu's final duel with the sultan and the death of the latter by his hand is missing. Instead, the narrator comes to the fore in a first epilogue, lamenting his lack of success in love and offering to continue the stories of Partonopeu's squire, Anselot, as well as of the sultan and of Gaudin, if his lady so desires, which she does. Thereafter, some of these threads are developed, beginning with Anselot's (love) story (in first person), followed by the revenge campaign of the conveniently resuscitated sultan. The continuation concludes with a second epilogue, in which the narrator praises his beloved's beauty and virtue and names her with the senhal (sobriquet) Passe-Rose (hollyhock), according to the conventions of troubadour lyric.[27] The main features of the continuation in terms of style are the change of metre (from the common octosyllabic couplets to two long sequences in alexandrines and decasyllables respectively) and the partial shift to first-person narration.

The key principle followed by the *Partonopeu* poet has been aptly defined as fusion,[28] the creative rewriting and blending of two major currents that dominated vernacular fiction in the late 1160s: narratives based on (written) classical (Apuleius) and medieval sources (such as the *romans d'antiquité*)[29] with their long descriptions of artefacts, cities and combat scenes, and stories deriving from Celtic and more generally folkloric (oral) sources (such as Marie de France's *lais*), focusing on

[27] On the name Passe Rose and on the possibility that the poet's patroness, Marguerite de Blois, may hide behind this sobriquet, see Eley 2011: 192–205.

[28] Bruckner 1993a: 109; already Fourier 1960: 440–41 had called Partonopeu 'a kind of summa of twelfth-century writing'.

[29] This concerns primarily the trias *Roman de Thèbes*, *Roman d'Eneas*, *Roman de Troye*, on which see, among many, Schöning 1991 and Mora-Lebrun 2008.

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magic and the marvellous.[30] Along with these ingredients, *Partonopeu* is also enriched by borrowings from troubadour poetry as well as from genealogical chronicles. As for the first, they are recognizable above all in the decidedly lyrical stance the narrator adopts. In fact, he often interferes in the love story he narrates with pseudo-biographical first-person asides, in which he compares his own unhappy unrequited love to those of his characters, thereby playing the role of the unhappy suitor so typical of troubadour lyric.[31] The genealogical intent, on the other hand, is clearly expressed from the very beginning in the prologue where the hero's ancestry, and hence the Capetians' lineage, is traced back to the Trojan king Priam. In this way *Partonopeu* constructs a kind of alternative draft to Wace's *Roman de Brut*, where the Plantagenet family, a rival of the French royal house, is credited with Trojan origins.[32] It has been suggested that the romance aimed at enhancing the nobility of the French royal house and, at the same time, reflecting the counts of Blois' friendly relations with Byzantium through the ideal of a Byzantine–Western alliance peacefully achieved by way of marriage.[33]

In other words, the tale of *Partonopeu* can be seen as a prime example of what Douglas Kelly has aptly called the 'Conspiracy of Allusion', referring to the multiple medieval practices of rewriting, the blending of different genres to form a new hybrid creation and, more generally, the intrinsic intertextuality of medieval writings.[34] But what are we to do with such a dazzling mixture of heterogeneous narrative motifs? Is there anything that could be meaningfully compared with Byzantine narratives? I believe so, and I will begin with a comparison between *Partonopeu* and *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*.

Partonopeu de Blois – Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe: a Comparative Study

Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe was probably composed at the very beginning of the fourteenth century in Constantinople. It may be the work of

[30] Bruckner 1993a: 110–15. On the chronology of Marie's *Lais*, see Short 2007: 326–38, esp. 337; on the relationship of *Partonopeu* and *Lais*, see also Eley 2011: 12–13.

[31] Walters 1992 and Gingras 2004: 140–1.

[32] Simons and Eley 1995: 7–14; Eley 2011: 50–9; Bruckner 1993b; Gingras 2004: 136–8. On the prologue's sources, see Fourrier 1960: 392–411.

[33] Gaullier-Bougassas 1999: 52–4. On the potential relation between *Partonopeu de Blois* and the Byzantine twelfth-century novel, see Söderblom Saarela 2016 and 2017.

[34] Kelly 1999.

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Andronikos Komnenos Palaiologos, a cousin of the ruling emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282–1328).[35] The story runs as follows. An unnamed king of an unnamed kingdom sends his three sons out into the world on a quest in order to prove themselves worthy of succession by their bravery. The youngest, Kallimachos, proves to be the most reckless of the three, and is the only one who dares to enter the Dragon's castle, a forbidding fortress guarded by frightening snakes. There, he kills the monster, frees a princess held captive in the fortress, and falls in love with her. Sometime later, the princess is abducted by a suitor with the help of a witch and by means of a magic apple. Kallimachos sets out to search for his beloved, enters his rival's castle disguised as a gardener, and reveals himself to her by attaching the ring he had received from her to a branch of a tree. Eventually, the lovers are reunited and come back to the disenchanted castle where they first enjoyed love's delight.

Scholars have long recognized the intimate ties connecting *Kallimachos* with the world of the fairy tale. In fact, just as in *Partonopeu*, fairy-tale elements shape the atmosphere of the romance, lending it a distinct tone, however without making it a naive literary product. Despite all the differences in content and tone, both romances share some common elements, the most conspicuous being the narrative sequence centred on the visit to the lonely castle. It therefore deserves a closer look.

In both *Partonopeu* and *Kallimachos* the heroes undergo a very similar experience: they have to face the marvellous in the form of a wondrous castle (a whole city with many palaces in *Partonopeu*) where they both experience sexual fulfilment. In both cases the castle bears the features of marvellous spaces, dominated by magic and secluded from the real world the heroes belong to. The boundaries between the two realms are marked by dangerous liminal spaces, the sea and a towering mountain respectively. The main impression of both castles is that of overwhelming brightness[36] due to the wall's amazing cladding: white and red marble in *Partonopeu*,[37] gold leaf and precious stones in *Kallimachos*.[38] The castle/city walls are

[35] All necessary information on the romance is to be found in Cupane 2016a: 95–97 and 114–18.

[36] *Partonopeu de Blois* 787–8 (Collet and Jorris): 'Et voit les murs de la cité | qui contre ciel donent clarté'; cf. 766–8: 'li enfes voit molt grans clartés; | et quant la nuis est plus obscure | de tant est la clartés plus pure' = *Kallimachos* 179–80 (Cupane): καὶ τοῦ χρυσοῦ τὸ καθαρὸν, τὸ στίλβον τὸ τοῦ κάλλους | ἐνίκα πάσας ἐκ παντὸς ἡλιακὰς ἀκτίνας ('the shine of gold, its wonderful glittering wholly superseded the sun's rays').

[37] *Partonopeu de Blois* 791–94 (Collet and Jorris): 'Blans est li marbres dont ils sont | et vermel aval et amont, | tot a eschiekier par quareaus | est tot li mur trosque et creteaus.'

[38] *Kallimachos* 178–83 (Cupane): Τὸ τεῖχος ἦτον ὑψηλὸν, ὁλόχρυσον ἀπέξω, | . . . | τὸ δέ γε σφυρηλάτημα τῶν ἀκροπυργωμάτων | ἀπὸ συμμίκτου καὶ χρυσοῦ καὶ λίθων καὶ μαργάρων

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guarded by live serpents and dragons in *Kallimachos*,[39] crowned with zoomorphic sculptures (lions, eagles, dragons) in *Partonopeu*.[40] Here other lavishly decorated buildings are also to be found, among them one with gilded front-reliefs representing the celestial bodies, the four elements and the calendar, as well as the wars and the heroic deeds of the old times.[41] Such similarities are, of course, not specific and therefore not indicative. Educated as they were, both authors drew from their respective literary traditions. The *Partonopeu* poet most probably modelled his description on the Carthage and Babylon ekphraseis in the *Roman d'Eneas* (407–70; 497–539) and in *Floire et Blancheflor* (1748–1952) respectively, both of which focused on the architectural structure of the city complex more than on the interior decoration. The author of *Kallimachos*, on the other hand, concentrates more on ornamental aspects of the interior decoration of special buildings (as the bathhouse in 291–354), thereby mirroring Byzantine palatial architecture, certainly reminiscent of the analogous description in *Velthandros and Chrysantza*.[42] Nevertheless, the overall narrative situation is indeed comparable, all the more so when one proceeds to the next narrative sequence.

Once inside, both Partonopeu and Kallimachos stand, as the poets explicitly state, in a deserted awe-inspiring space, absolutely devoid of people.[43] As a result, their reactions are ambivalent, oscillating between amazement and fear, delight and malaise. This ambivalence is indicated through the use of appropriate terminology, mainly of keywords such as the substantives ἀπορία, ζάλη, σύγχυσις (perplexity, distress, confusion) or the verbs φοβοῦμαι, τρέμω, ἐξαπορῶ (to be frightened, to tremble, to

('the wall was very high and entirely laminated in gold | . . . | the top of the battlements was clad in gold mixed with pearls and gem').

39 *Kallimachos* 189–92 (Cupane): καὶ ζῶντες ὄφεις εἰς αὐτὰς τὰς κεκελεισμένας πύλας | ὄφεις μεγάλοι, φοβεροὶ καὶ θῆρες παρὰ φύσιν | ἄγρυπνοι φύλακες ὀξεῖς τοῦ τηλικούτου κάστρου | ὁρμῶσι, δράκοντες φρικτοὶ καὶ πυλωροὶ θηρία ('live serpents, supernatural beasts, huge and frightening rushed against the sealed gates. Awesome dragons, beasts, were the wakeful and sharp warder of such a castle').

40 *Partonopeu de Blois* 841–4 (Collet and Jorris): 'sor les pumeaus sont li lion | et li aiglet et li dragon, | et ymages d'autre figure | qui samblent vives par nature, | toutes covertes de fin or.'

41 *Partonopeu de Blois* 852–8 (Collet and Jorris). In *Kallimachos* 415–37, a similar iconography is to be found on the vaulted dome of the bedchamber.

42 On this see Cupane 2015: 107–18

43 e.g. *Kallimachos* 351 (Cupane): ἄνθρωπον μὲν οὐκ εἶδεν (no human being to see); 366: οὐκ ἦν ἀνθρώπου φύσις (not a living soul); 408: πολλὴ γὰρ ἦν ἡ μόνωσις τοῦ παραξένου τόπου ('great was the loneliness of the wondrous place') = *Partonopeu de Blois* 774 (Collet and Jorris): 'Partonopeus n'i voit rien vive'; 971: 'mais n'i voit nule rien vivant.'

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be troubled).[44] Moreover, both heroes feel themselves confronted with supernatural powers, which only increases their fear.[45] Heroes of adventure romance as they are, both Kallimachos and Partonopeu overcome their fear, enter the palace, and find a dining room where there are huge tables, heavily laden with golden dishes and goblets, cups made out of precious stones as well as plenty of exquisite food and drink.[46] The two of them do not abstain from eating and drinking, but whereas Partonopeu enjoys the culinary delicacies served by invisible hands,[47] Kallimachos only nibbles at the food, hardly bearing the building's wondrous loneliness (390).[48] The next step leads the heroes in the most secluded room of the palace, the owner's bed chamber, where they both encounter their prospective beloved.[49]

Unlike the descriptive similarities mentioned above, the number and quality of the shared elements in this case are sufficient to make us believe that the poet of *Kallimachos* would have been acquainted with the popular tale of *Partonopeu* – if not with a written version, at least orally. Here he found yet another modulation of the wondrous castle motif that was already known to him from the earlier Byzantine romances, *Livistros and Rhodamne* and *Velthandros and Chrysantza*,[50] and borrowed it, at the same time refashioning the story to make it fit into his own narrative concept.

However, once the heroes cross the threshold of the private space and the heroine enters the stage the two romances part ways and tell different stories – the Byzantine story offering, so to speak, the reverse of the French. Whereas Partonopeu never sees (more than that, is forbidden

[44] See e.g. *Kallimachos* 345 (Cupane): ἀπορῶν (being puzzled), 195: ἐξεπλάγησαν, ἐθάυμασαν (they were appalled, they wondered), 209: ἐξεθαμβήθησαν (they were amazed), 369–70: ζάλην (distress), σύγχυσιν (confusion), ταραχὴν (trouble), 390: θορυβισμένος (troubled), 411: ἀγανακτῶν, φροντίζων (being vexed, being anxious) corresponding to the substantives 'measle, dolor, paor' or the verbs 's'espert, merveiller, esbahir, s'esmaier' in *Partonopeu de Blois* 807–15; 873–80; 897; 905–10 (Collet and Jorris). On the imagery of astonishment and wonder in the Palaiologan romances, see Cupane 2014: 194–5; for a different approach, see Agapitos 2004: 40–5.

[45] See e.g. *Kallimachos* 386–7 (Cupane): φοβοῦμαι τὰ παράδοξα καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ταῦτα | μήπως καὶ τίποτε κακὸν ἔχουσι κεκρυμμένον ('I fear all these supernatural and wondrous things | for they may be fraught with hidden dangers') = *Partonopeu de Blois* 808 (Collet and Jorris): 'cuide que soit faerie'; 880: 'a por fantosme tot tenu'; 906: 'cuide molt estre engeniés'; 1050–1: 'crient molt que diables li aient fait cest bel samblant.'

[46] This motif occurs in both folk tales and medieval romances; see Bozóky 1974: 349–52; see also below.

[47] The whole passage covers 921–1053 (Collet and Jorris).

[48] The whole passage covers 355–410 (Cupane).

[49] *Partonopeu de Blois* 1121–1316 (Collet and Jorris) = *Kallimachos* 415–765 (Cupane).

[50] On the castle as the new setting of late Byzantine vernacular romances, see Cupane 2014: 190–5; Cupane, 2016: 98–101 and 114–15 (on *Kallimachos* in particular).

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to see) his beloved,[51] Kallimachos faces from the outset his mistress-to-be, hanging naked by the hair in the dazzling light of the dragon's golden chamber.[52] Partonopeu's plot follows – with reversed gender roles – the outline of the tale of Cupid and Psyche as narrated in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*.[53] This means that the erotic experience of the protagonists unfolds in complete darkness – only after the breaking of the prohibition does the overwhelming beauty of Cupid's naked body appear. In both Apuleius and *Partonopeu*, the invisibility of the erotic body – male and female respectively – effectively contrasts the vivid representation of the erotic play.[54] Regardless of whether the French poet took the lovely story from the short summary enclosed in the mythological compendium of the fifth-century mythographer Planciadis Fulgentius or perhaps was acquainted with Apuleius's work itself,[55] the gender reversal and the consequent rearrangement of the balance of power between the sexes was no doubt a major departure from the story he had received. It is an impressive witness of the poet's originality and the fusion that he operated between the classical plot and the different Celtic folk tales in which the secret love of a mighty fairy-mistress for a young and poor man was narrated.[56]

The poet of *Kallimachos*, on the contrary, describes more than one sexual encounter, all of them taking place in full light, further enhanced by the shining of gold and precious stones. Even the only nocturnal encounter of the heroes is told to be 'enlightened by the glim of the daily lovemaking'.[57] The sexual details emphatically underscored in *Partonopeu* are passed over in silence[58] or discretely alluded to.[59] By contrast, the female erotic body is openly disclosed in all its glorious nakedness.

[51] *Partonopeu de Blois* 1441–4 (Collet and Jorris).
[52] *Kallimachos* 449–69 (Cupane).
[53] Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 4, 28–6, 24.
[54] The nightly lovemaking of the protagonists in the darkness is deemed to be the most realistic description of sexual seduction that medieval literature has to offer; see Eley 2011: 24: 'an almost pornographic bedroom scene'.
[55] On the possible dependence of *Partonopeu* from Fulgentius (*Mythologiae* III 6), see Brown 1964: 199–203; on Fulgentius's allegorical reading of Apuleius, see Haig Gaisser 2008: 53–9.
[56] As, for instance, those that underlie the *Lais* by Marie de France; see on this topic Eley 2011: 27–9; on the common motif stock shared by both *Partonopeu* and the *Lais*, see Newstead 1946.
[57] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1934 (Cupane): ἦλθεν ἡ νὺξ μετὰ φωτὸς ἡμερινῶν ἐρώτων.
[58] See e.g. the aposiopesis in *Kallimachos* 756 (Cupane): τὰ δὲ ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ καιροῦ κατὰ λεπτὸν οὐ γράφω ('I will not tell in detail what happened in the meantime') that abruptly cuts off the narration of the first sexual encounter of the two protagonists: 754–5 ἦλθον εἰς ἄλλους λόγους, | εἰς γλυκωτέρους καὶ καλοὺς ὡσὰν μαλακωτέρους ('they came to different words, to more sweet, cosy and tender ones').
[59] e.g. 768–9 (Cupane): μετὰ γοῦν ἄλλα τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἐρωτοχαρίτων, | ὅσα μανθάνει φυσικὰ ἐρωτικὴ καρδία ('after the other joys of love that every loving heart naturally learns').

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This is a scene of great visual impact, which may well be built on literary or pictorial representations of Andromeda. The tale was very well known among Byzantine scholars and educated people, not only from the short summary enclosed in Apollodorus's *Bibliotheca*[60] or from the flowery ekphrasis of a painting in the novel *Leucippe and Clitophon* by Achilles Tatius,[61] but also from the scholia on Lycophron's *Alexandra* by John Tzetzes.[62] Furthermore, the *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai* (eighth/ninth century) report that a sculptural group representing Perseus and Andromeda once stood in the bath of Konstantiana (or Konstantiniana).[63] Since that monument would have been long gone by the fourteenth century, a literary suggestion seems more probable. The author of *Kallimachos* may well have been acquainted with the *Parastaseis* although the very succinct, dry report they offer (the same also applies to the texts by Apollodorus and Tzetzes) can hardly have inspired the sensual, flowery depiction in our romance, pointing to a more literary elaboration of the myth.

Such a source was easily available for a learned author of a solid educational background as the author of *Kallimachos*, whether he is identical with Andronikos Komnenos Palaiologos or not. In addition to his obvious knowledge of the contemporary romances and ancient novels, he also seems to have been well acquainted with the huge bulk of Hellenistic epigrammatic literature usually called *Anthologia Palatina*, re-edited by Maximos Planudes at the end of the thirteenth century and thus brought back to the attention of students and scholars. As has been convincingly argued, the sensual bath scenes in *Kallimachos* are deeply indebted to a set of epigrams on this topic included in Book VI of the *Palatina*.[64] This was not the only Planudean work exploited by the author of *Kallimachos*. Ancient mythology was obviously a core theme of Planudes's literary interest, due most probably to his teaching activity. It is therefore no coincidence that he did not refrain from taking into account also the Latin interpretation of the Greek myths as represented in Ovid's famous mythological 'handbook', the *Metamorphoses*, which Planudes translated together with Ovid's erotic works: *Heroides*, *Ars amatoria* and *Remedia amoris*. In Book IV of the *Metamorphoses*, one of the most vivid images of Andromeda chained naked to a rock is to be found.[65]

[60] Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 2.4, 3–4. [61] Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* 3.7.
[62] *Scholia ad Lycophronis Alexandram* 838–42 (Scheer).
[63] See *Parastaseis*, cap. 85 (pp. 71–2 in Cameron and Herrin 1984); see the related commentary in Berger 1988: 371–3.
[64] Agapitos 1990. [65] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 4.670–83.

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The overall situation in the Perseus and Andromeda tale is, in fact, very similar to the corresponding scene in the romance. In both, a naked maid is bound and exposed to a monster – in Ovid/Planudes it is a sea monster (κῆτος),[66] in Kallimachos a δράκων[67] – and both the rescuers stand speechless looking at the wonderful girl they first, incapable to act, believe to be a work of art.[68] Ovid even remarks humorously that Perseus, struck by Eros's arrow, almost forgets to flap his wings.[69]

The intertextual congruence is such that a direct relationship between *Kallimachos* and the Planudean version of the Andromeda's story can safely be assumed. Once again, the author of *Kallimachos* proves to be as eclectic in choosing, reusing and combining his sources of inspiration as was his French peer. His narrative technique can be described in the exact same words that Penny Eley used to define the narrative concept of *Partonopeu*:

> The poet set out to bring entire narrative paradigms into alignment and fuse them together . . . His models are blended in such a way that it is impossible to say either 'This is narrative model X with an admixture of model Y' or 'This is narrative model Y with an admixture of model X' . . . Fusion produces narrative Z, which is recognizably both X and Y, but also something quite different from either of them.[70]

Greek learned novels and vernacular romances, ancient epigrammatic poetry, Ovidian mythological stories and, last but not least, French chivalric tales – all of them were equally important ingredients of the *Kallimachos* romance recipe.

An Elusive Partner: the International Folk Tale

As we have seen above, both *Partonopeu* and *Kallimachos* incorporated several fairy-tale motifs in their narrations. The first has the plot start with

[66] However, the more popular tradition as documented in the *Parastaseis* already calls the monster δράκων, see cap. 85, l. 4: τῷ ἐκεῖσε ἐμφωλεύντι δράκοντι.

[67] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 502, 515, 521ff. (Cupane).

[68] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 461 (Cupane): εἶναι καὶ ταύτην ἔλεγεν ἐκ τῶν ζωγραφημάτων ('he believed that she, too, was a painting') = *Metamorphoses* 4.675: *marmoreum ratus esset opus*. Admittedly, already Achilles Tatius 3.7.2 had Andromeda compared with a work of art: ἔοικε τὸ θέαμα, εἰ μὲν εἰς τὸ κάλλος ἀπίδοις, ἀγάλματι καινῷ, however, without saying anything about the impact the view of the beautiful girl in distress had on the hero.

[69] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 4.677: *paene suas quatere est oblitus in aere pennas* = Planudes, *Ovid Metamorphoses* 4.873–4 (Papathomopoulos and Tsabare): καὶ μικροῦ τὰς ἑαυτοῦ πτέρυγας ἐν ἀέρι κινεῖν ἐπελάθετο.

[70] Eley 2011: 7 and 8.

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the motif of the wondrous hunt (the hero chases an enchanted animal which leads him into the otherworldly realm of wonder)[71] and goes on to reshape what has been called 'our earliest evidence for one vast complex of tales about animal grooms',[72] i.e. the famous Apuleian story of Cupid and Psyche with reversed gender roles. However, the 'written' tale of Cupid and Psyche may draw upon an old narrative tradition of 'told' tales, which the author himself seems to suggest by presenting the story as an oral tale recounted by an old woman.[73] Indeed, a very similar narrative structure underlies countless orally transmitted folk stories, spread all over the world, belonging to the type conventionally called the *disenchanted husband*.[74] It is also highly probable that there is some kind of relationship between such a fairy-tale type and the literary version by Apuleius. To be sure, the way in which they are related is not clear, and scholarly opinions on the subject vary widely, ranging from the suggestion of a purely literary creation by Apuleius himself to that of a long oral tradition of which Apuleius would be the first written evidence.[75]

Be that as it may, one can safely assume that there were orally transmitted fairy/folk tales spread over the world, of which mythological narratives handed down in literary sources are simply special adaptations, related to particular places and/or historical (or mythical) famous persons. Such tales were not recorded in written form because of the low esteem they enjoyed among literate authors.[76] Once committed to writing, the tales led a, double life, so to speak, both in oral (popular) and written (literary) form and reached in that way the Middle Ages. Although medieval (Christian) learned culture was to a high degree repressive of oral culture, the boundaries between learned and popular culture were highly porous. In the western Middle Ages, by the time when many vernacular languages made the leap from orality to literacy (from the eleventh/twelfth century onwards), an openness to folk literature developed among clerics. A lively exchange that was unprecedented in scope can be ascertained.[77]

71 The motif is exhaustively analysed by Donà 2003: 470–5 (on *Partonopeu* and related literary and folk tales).
72 Ziolkowski 2007: 209.
73 See on this Ziolkowski 2007: 36–8 and 57–8, as well as Ziolkowski 2002.
74 It is type ATU 425B, itself a subtype of ATU 425 (*The Search for the Lost Husband*) in the classification of Uther 2004: 247–56.
75 See Fehling 1977 and Swahn 1955 respectively. A useful overview can be found in Hansen 2002: 12–19 and 100–14, who supports the priority of the oral narrative. On the Greek origin of the folk tale, see Megas 1967b.
76 See Hansen 2002: 12–19. On the relationship between mythos and folk tale, see also the well-balanced overview by Röhrich 1984.
77 On this issue Ziolkowski 2007: 40–3; see also Varvaro 1994: 14–19 and 198–213; Schmitt 1981.

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For a learned author, as the anonymous poet of *Partonopeu* certainly was, the recourse to both the oral and the literary tradition was possible, and he certainly made use of both. Modern research can hardly disentangle such a multifaceted patchwork of sources. In suggesting that the narrative sequence of *Partonopeu* that I analysed above may go back directly to the Apuleian tale, I am well aware that traditional oral stories are by no means to be ruled out. Rather, it is even to be assumed that a double influence may have been at work here.[78]

In Byzantium the possibility of exchange between popular and learned literature was from the outset more problematic, the bridge between the two traditions extremely difficult to cross. While a few open-minded scholars, such as Eustathios of Thessalonike or the (less sympathetic) canonist Theodore Balsamon (both twelfth century) and, last but not least, hagiography provide some useful insight in folk customs and beliefs, hardly anything is known about Byzantine folk tales.[79] The binding force of the classical tradition consequently kept popular narratives away and did not allow for them to enter the realm of literature. This situation did not change radically with the emergence of the vernacular, but the lower register certainly loosened the ruling literary standards by widening the spectrum of possibilities. The romance of *Kallimachos*, while written in all likelihood by a learned author, is a case in point.

The author adopts both the narrative structure and several motifs of folk tale,[80] but at the same time he delights in changing these motifs as to make them fit his erotic plot.[81] The reference type, according to the tales categorization of Aarne, Thompson and Uther (= ATU), is no. 300 *The Dragon Slayer*[82] with its related subtypes.[83] *Kallimachos* shares several scattered motifs with this group of tales, such as the three brothers, the youngest as the best, the dragon controlling the source of water and thus depriving people of water, the dragon's castle, the loneliness of the castle, the dragon's wishing-table, the princess imprisoned, the magic objects

[78] On the interaction between folklore and medieval literature, see Rosenberg 1979; for a more sceptical approach, see Guerreau 1983.
[79] See the overview by Meraklis 1992: 27–44 (ch. 2: 'Byzantinisches Erzählgut').
[80] See the structural analysis of the text by Castillo Ramirez 2000, based on the narratological categories elaborated by V. Propp.
[81] Examples in Diller 1977: 31–6 and already in Megas 1956.
[82] Uther 2004: 174–5; see Rörich 1981. For the diffusion of the type in the Greek world, see Megas et al. 2002: 20–32; some Greek versions of the tale are analysed by Alexiadis 1982. The best-known ancient version of this type is the classical legend of Perseus and Andromeda, on which see Hansen 2002: 119–22.
[83] ATU 300A, 301, 302 and 303 (with the associated subtypes); Uther 2004: 175–88.

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(in this case an apple) and the mourning city. However, none of these motifs fulfils the same function it has in the folk tales. What is more, several fundamental elements of the traditional narratives are lacking (e.g. the cutting of the monster's tongue, the false hero, the exposition of the girl), and not a single narrative sequence exactly matches any sequence in a folk tale.[84] Therefore, it is impossible to say whether the poet found the above-mentioned motifs in a single, already existing (oral) form of the *Dragon Slayer* tale and rewrote them creatively, or rather was inspired by other literary works (e.g. earlier romances, the *Digenis Akritis*[85] or mythological stories).

The only time the poet of *Kallimachos* comes very close to a sustained fairy-tale narrative sequence is the story, narrated by the heroine herself, about how the dragon (or rather an anthropomorphic ogre, as the Greek form δράκος, instead of δράκων, suggests) abducted her. The monster had fallen in love with her and, faced with her refusal to get married, first withdrew the water of the source, thus depriving people of water. Since the girl still refused to comply, the dragon swallowed her parents and all inhabitants of the kingdom, carried her away and imprisoned her in his golden castle, where he delighted in torturing her every day, though respecting her virginity.[86] This is indeed the basic outline of one of the oldest folk tales, of which the myth of Perseus and Andromeda as well as the twelfth-century (or possibly earlier) legend of St George the dragon slayer are the best-known literary transpositions.[87] Here, again, only the main lines of the story have been retained. Fundamental elements of the folk tale, such as the dragon's request to have a young girl sacrificed every year in order to keep the city safe from ravaging or the false hero, have been dropped. The hero's behaviour itself has been downgraded to fit to the awe-inspiring atmosphere of the mysterious castle: it is no coincidence that Kallimachos prudently conceals himself when the monster appears and needs to be spurned by the princess in order to fulfil his duty as a hero.

[84] Admittedly, fairy-tale motifs move easily from one tale to another, are flexibly combined and replaced to fit new contexts also depending on the specific geographical areas; on this, see e.g. Puchner 2016: 94–8 (about the *Dragon Slayer* tale).

[85] *Digenis Akritis* ***G*** 2375–417 (Jeffreys); a Freudian reading of Digenis's encounter with the dragon is to be found in Livanos 2011.

[86] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 648–93 (Cupane); see Diller 1977: 31–2.

[87] On the Perseus and other dragons-slayer myths as relying on old oral tradition, see Hansen 2002: 118–30: on the George's legend and its relationship to the oral tradition, see Politis 1912/13: 215–25; see also Aufhauser 1911.

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The motif of the lonely castle, too, belongs to the category of folk-tale motifs. In some tales, the hero also finds a rich banquet prepared.[88] Therefore, the possibility that the authors of both *Partonopeu* and *Kallimachos* knew the motif from their respective folk tradition and used it independently from one another cannot be entirely ruled out. To sum up, the blending of learned literary and oral popular sources appears to be a typical feature of the narrative style of both *Partonopeu* and *Kallimachos*. Both literary and folk tradition, therefore, need to be taken into account if we are to do full justice to the complexity and originality of the anonymous poets. And, in speaking of literary tradition within the cultural framework of late Byzantium, western vernacular tradition must – of course – be included. Against the background of the unabated cultural exchanges between western and eastern literature, knowledge of narrative material from both directions, written or oral, must be assumed, even though the ways through which this material was transmitted usually remain in the dark.

Other Traces of *Partonopeu* in Byzantine Vernacular Romances: *Livistros and Rhodamne*

Of course, just one common link would provide a shaky argument. However, the poet of *Kallimachos* was neither the only nor the first who seems to have engaged in a fruitful dialogue with *Partonopeu*. *Livistros and Rhodamne* is thought to have been written in the second half of the thirteenth century, possibly in Constantinople at the court of Andronikos II Palaiologos, thus being a very original product of the early Palaiologan literary revival.[89] *Livistros* is the only 'original' romance that survives in three different versions. Such reworking is evidence both of the popularity of the romance and of its dissemination in the post-Byzantine period. One of the most conspicuous features of *Livistros* is its narrative frame (the author presents his tale as being recited from an intradiegetic narrator in front of his lady, the queen, with her court) and, most particularly, its open-endedness. Indeed, after the protagonists have married and the narrator himself celebrates his wedding with the heroine's sister, the author lets the tale continue. As a widower, the narrator

[88] E.g. the tales belonging to the group ATU 400 (*The Man on Quest for his Lost Wife*); Uther 2004: 231–4; see also the list drawn up by Bozoky 1974: 355–6 based on French folk tales.

[89] On the romance, see Cupane 2016a: 101–10 (with further literature); for an earlier chronology, see Agapitos 1993: 101–17 and Agapitos 2013: 409–15. See also Chapter 4 in the present volume.

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returns back home to his first love, so that the narrative itself can be understood as gift of love for her. This could be a satisfying closure for a love tale, but the author keeps the fictive and actual audience in suspense by the promise of a sequel: having brought to conclusion the story of his friend, Livistros, the narrator Klitovon searches for an author for his personal love story which, in his opinion, failed to be properly appreciated. This author should have certain characteristics: most importantly, he must possess a sympathetic and compassionate heart and the necessary inclination to write love stories, but otherwise is permitted to abridge and edit the material as he pleases.[90]

Such an open closure is unparalleled in Greek romance literature, ancient and medieval, that always concludes with the wedding of the protagonist couple; instead, it comes very close to what has been aptly called *Partonopeu*'s 'poetic of continuation'.[91] In the epilogue of version **B/T**, the continuator-narrator explicitly introduces the possibility of continuing the story if his lady-love Passe Flore so desires. He uses this device in order to bind together the continuation he is about to start with the original story. He even enumerates the possible strings of narrative to be picked up, which he summarizes as the stories of three secondary characters. All these threads he develops in a continuation, which reaches its full extent in only one manuscript (**T**).[92] The similarity to the conclusion of *Livistros* is striking. However, there are also conspicuous differences. In *Livistros*, we have an intradiegetic narrator, and the idea of a sequel is but a rhetorical device, entirely independent from the lady's wish and/or behaviour. Looking at all redactions and manuscripts of the text, there is not the slightest indication that a continuation was planned at all. *Partonopeu*, on the contrary, features an author-narrator who slips into the role of an unrequited lover[93] promising a sequel which was already inscribed in the actual text,[94] and which will actually be achieved, making it dependent on the female assent. Thus, in taking over the narrative device the poet of *Livistros* gave it yet another twist: instead of staging a poet-narrator affording a

[90] *Livistros and Rhodamne* **α** 4590–4601 (Agapitos). [91] Bruckner 1993a: 153.
[92] See Eley 2011: 1–2, and above.
[93] *Partonopeu*'s ending will be imitated a decade later in *Le bel inconnu* by Renaut de Beaujeu, who also takes on the literary persona of the unrequited lover promising a sequel of the story depending on the stance of his lady; see on this Walters 1992.
[94] *Partonopeu de Blois* 5737 and 5739–40 (Collet and Jorris): 'n'en dirais plus a ceste fois | . . . | mais la avant cant je devrai | ses aventures conterai.'

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pretext for prolonging the very story he intended to continue, he invented a romance character in search of an author.

This is not, of course, the only device *Livistros* and *Partonopeu* share. In both romances, the bride is won in a tournament expressly summoned in order to choose the one who will be worthy to be the Princess's husband and the kingdom's new ruler. In *Livistros* it is Princess Rhodamne herself, having been already promised to Verderichos, the King of Egypt, who proposes a joust between the two suitors, sure as she is that her beloved Livistros will be the winner. No other competitors will take part in the fight, to which the author does not pay particular attention.[95] In *Partonopeu*, on the contrary, it is the suggestion of Melior's barons, who wish their lady to have a suitable partner at her side and the kingdom a suitable ruler. The competition is a regular tournament with numerous participants along with their retinues fighting against each other, lasting three days.[96] The description of this event constitutes one major focus of the romance and covers no fewer than 1,800 lines.[97] Interestingly enough, both romances feature an oriental ruler as the hero's antagonist – the Sultan of Persia in *Partonopeu*, the Egyptian king in *Livistros*.[98]

As different as the literary elaboration of the theme in the two romances may be, they recognizably exploit the same stock material that goes back to an old folkloric fund whose core is also to be found in ancient Greek mythological stories.[99] The chivalric garb that the motif has been given in *Livistros,* however, clearly depends on *Partonopeu* which, along with Chrétien de Troyes's *Lancelot* and *Hypomédon*[100] by Hue de Rotelande (both later contemporaries of *Partonopeu*), provides a clear functional link between tournament and bride-winning theme. The latter appears for the first time in medieval Greek narrative literature, and one has to wait until the end of the fifteenth century in order to have a second occurrence in the late *Imberios and Margarona*, itself an adaptation of the extremely successful tale of *Pierre de Provence et belle Maguelonne*.[101]

[95] *Livistros and Rhodamne* **a**, 2382–93 (Agapitos).
[96] The three days are also a folkloric motif; on its impact on in medieval Arthurian literature see Weston, *The three days' tournament* (without consideration of *Partonopeu*).
[97] See *Partonopeu de Blois* 6547–632 (Collet and Jorris) for the decision of the barons and 7877–9684 (Collet and Jorris) for the tournament.
[98] *Livistros and Rhodamne,* **α**, 2461–4 (Agapitos), the short portrait of the Egyptian king Verderichos = *Partonopeu de Blois* 9963–10.000 (Collet and Jorris) portrait of the sultan Margaris.
[99] Examples are in Hansen 2002: 56–61.
[100] See Weston 1902: 34–43 and 1–14 respectively.
[101] On the adaptation see recently Yiavis 2016: 148–50; cf. Yiavis 2006. See also Chapter 5 in the present volume.

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The poet of *Livistros* obviously felt free to adapt the borrowed motif to his narrative concept. He rejected the folkloric detail of the three days as well as the incognito motif, which did not suit to his plot; last but not least, he reduced the huge episode of his template to its mere main lines. He did so perhaps conscious that his audience, evidently fond of lyrical inserts and love poetry, would not have appreciated such a huge description studded with technical details. However known this kind of game may have been in Byzantium at that time,[102] it should have had a bizarre effect on a Byzantine courtly audience and may not have been to everybody's taste.

Be that as it may, the author of *Livistros* was certainly very well acquainted with western literary trends, as I already tried to show elsewhere.[103] Furthermore, the author himself seems to disclose his knowledge of the medieval chivalric literature by having the heroine – in the fiction a western princess, just as her beloved Livistros – declare that 'The Latin race loves the braves, notably those wo fight for the sake of love and of adventure'.[104] Fighting for the sake of love and of adventure is indeed a matter of literature, not of reality. Hence, Rhodamne's declaration should be understood as the author's admission of his familiarity with chivalric narrative.

To be sure, Byzantine audiences learned to appreciate foreign tales from the West which they adapted and reused in various ways according to their needs and taste, even if they were not prepared to admit it. Western as well as oriental tales, and also scattered, mostly oral narrative motifs, sailed to Byzantium and infiltrated even the exclusive literary court circles. Several routes and opportunities existed, and *Partonopeu* was indeed a very plausible candidate for making the journey and settling down in Byzantium, just as its hero had done. Written in a milieu which maintained stable and friendly relationships with the Komnenian family since decades, the story of a cross-cultural marriage between a Byzantine princess and a scion of the French royal house may well have reached Constantinople on the eve of the Fourth Crusade, just like the *Roman de Troie*.[105] Perhaps it was even Louis of Blois, son of the romance's dedicatees, Thibaut V and Alix of Blois, who joined the Crusader army in 1203 and fell 1205 at the battle

[102] On tournaments in late Byzantium, see Schreiner 1996; Jones and Maguire 2002.
[103] See Cupane 1992: 292–305; Cupane 2016a: 98–108.
[104] *Livistros and Rhodamne* α, 2392–3 (Agapitos).
[105] Jacoby 1984: 633–4; Folena 1990: 272–3.

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of Adrianople, who took the book overseas.[106] We will never know when and how this and other similar journeys took place, but we can be sure that they did. Admittedly, the traces they left are difficult to detect, yet they surely made a decisive contribution to enlarging and enriching the late Byzantine narrative cosmos.[107]

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[106] On Louis of Blois, see Longnon 1978: 79–85.

[107] I would like to express my warm thanks to Ingela Nilsson and Adam Goldwyn for thoroughly reading this chapter and making suggestions on English style.

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CHAPTER 4

Dreams and Female Initiation in Livistros and Rhodamne *and* Hypnerotomachia Poliphili

Efthymia Priki

In his various literary and visual representations, Eros, or Cupid in the western tradition, often embodies the bittersweet nature of love and the emotional tensions generated by the process of falling in love.[1] In some cases, this embodiment is of a particularly violent nature:

> Βέτανε, φθάσε, κράτησε τὸν δήμιον τοξότην,
> τὸν σφάκτη τῆς καρδίας μου, τὸν διχοτομητή μου.
>
> Vetanos, come, restrain the killer bowman,
> who slaughters my heart and splits it in two![2]

> Et il carnifice et immite fanciullo, doppo lungo et cruento stracio et immanitate delle sventurate et mischine adulescentule. Quale cruento et exercitato in simili carnificii, dell'ardente vehiculo di subito discese, cum una soliferrea et tagliente Romphea, solute dal molesto iugo, et grave trahere per medio del suo pulsante core. Ello spogliato di qualunche venia et miseratione, cum rigida et incontaminata severitate, subito tranfisse.
>
> And the butchering and barbarous lad, after long and gory torture and enormity to these poor unlucky teenage girls, as being blood-thirsty and practiced in such executions, suddenly descended from the blazing vehicle, with an all-iron cleaving claymore, and when he had released them from the galling yoke and heavy draught, then in the middle of their pulsing hearts, he, devoid of any kind of forbearance or mercifulness, with stern untouched severity suddenly thrust them through.[3]

[1] The literary figure of Eros/Cupid has been the focus of several studies, such as Lassere 1946; Cupane 1973; Couliano 1984; Magdalino 1992; Konstan 1994; Gifford 2005; Cummings 2009; Nilsson 2009; Kingsley-Smith 2010; Christoforatou 2011; Pinheiro, Skinner and Zeitlin 2012; Agapitos 2013. However, to the extent of my knowledge, there are no studies discussing at length the representation of the god of love as an executioner in either late Byzantine or early Renaissance Italian literature and art.

[2] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 1426–7 (Agapitos). Trans. Agapitos. I would like to thank Prof. Panagiotis Agapitos for providing me with a copy of his unpublished translation.

[3] Trans. White: 269. I would like to thank Ian White for providing me with a copy of his unpublished translation. *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 396 [B3r] (Pozzi and Ciapponi). I also include pagination references in accordance with the 1499 edition in square brackets (as the Aldine edition was not

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The striking image of the god of love as an executioner, evident in these two quotes (τὸν δήμιον τοξότην / *il carnifice et immite fanciullo*), offers a vivid representation of the consequences of resisting or even defying love and presents erotic desire as an agonizing emotional experience. Interestingly, this image is intricately connected with two core elements of the texts cited: dreams and initiation.

Whether it concerns the awakening of sexual desire, the acquisition of knowledge about the mysteries of love, or the art of courting, the initiation of lovers is a recurring theme in medieval romances. In some cases, moreover, the theme of initiation acquires a central position in the narrative, becoming the driving force behind the relationship of the protagonist couple. Two such cases are the thirteenth-century Byzantine *Livistros and Rhodamne* and the fifteenth-century Italian prose romance *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, where the male and female protagonists go through initiation processes that activate their desire for each other, leading to their erotic union. Dreams provide the necessary ritual spaces where these initiation processes can be undertaken while also performing a mediating function in the relationship of the protagonist couple.[4]

Livistros and Rhodamne was probably written during the last years of Laskarid court at Nicaea, which ended in 1254.[5] Through a multilayered, complex narrative structure that could be best described as a 'Chinese box' – a narrative encased inside another narrative and so on – the anonymous poet tells the story of love between the Latin king Livistros and the Latin princess Rhodamne.[6] The first half of the romance contains four encased dream narratives. These dreams combined with Livistros's instruction by his Relative (Συγγενής) and his subsequent quest to find Rhodamne and win her heart, constitute the couple's initiation in the art of love and their mutual falling in love. The second half concerns the successful quest of Livistros and Klitovon, his travelling companion, to

paginated, these pages are referred to by signature (a–y) and leaf number (1r–8v); thus, a1r, a2r, a3r, a4r correspond to pages 1, 3, 5, 7 and so on).

4 For an extensive study of dreams and initiation in the two texts, see Priki 2015.

5 For the dating issue, see Agapitos 1993. Elizabeth Jeffreys notes in Chapter 8 in the present volume (n. 36) that the dating is rather speculative. For different views, see Cupane 2004: 440; Lendari 2007: 65–71; Cupane 2016: 101. The romance survives in five manuscripts dating to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which transmit three different redactions (a, E, V). Here, I am using the text of redaction 'alpha' – transmitted in three manuscripts (Leidensis Scaligeranus 55, Neapolitanus graecus III-Aa-9, Parisinus graecus 2910) – which constitutes the oldest of the surviving three redactions and the closest to the lost original. For the manuscript tradition, see Agapitos 2006: 67–93; Lendari 2007: 56–64.

6 For an extensive analysis of the narrative structure of the romance, see Agapitos 1991, 1999 and 2013: 389–416.

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find and rescue Rhodamne, who had been abducted by a foreign king a couple of years after her marriage to Livistros.

Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, a prose romance published in 1499 by Aldus Manutius in Venice, is considered one of the most celebrated illustrated printed books of the Italian Renaissance.[7] As such, it belongs to an entirely different context in terms of form, format and transmission. It is an early printed book (incunabulum) for which there are no extant authorial manuscripts, a work of literary and linguistic experimentation, produced within the context of Italian humanism, that had a profound impact on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature and art.[8] Its anonymous author has intentionally decided to puzzle his readers by concealing his identity with acrostics;[9] the name revealed by these acrostics is Francesco Colonna, whose actual historical identity remains an issue for debate.[10] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* offers a complex and enigmatic narrative about the oneiric quest of a lover to retrieve his beloved. The protagonist, Poliphilo, falls asleep and dreams of journeying through a series of imaginary landscapes in order to be reunited with Polia, who is actually dead. The story is divided into two parts, Book I and Book II: in the first part, Poliphilo narrates his oneiric adventures until his final union with Polia at the Cytherean island, while in the second part Polia takes up the narration and recounts her story, in which she undergoes her own initiation, where dreams, as shorter encased narratives, play a definitive role.

Though belonging to different historical and sociocultural environments, *Livistros and Rhodamne* and the *Hypnerotomachia* present intriguing similarities in terms of the ways they deal with their protagonists' initiation experiences both on a structural and on a thematic level. While *Livistros and Rhodamne* is not a 'dream romance' like the *Hypnerotomachia*, the

[7] The first Aldine edition published anonymously under the title *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili ubi humana omnia nisi somnium esse docet* provides us with the date of publication in the *Errata* page: *Venetiis Mense decembri. M.ID. in aedibus Aldi Manutii* (In Venice in the month of December 1499 at the printing house of Aldus Manutius).

[8] On the reception of the *Hypnerotomachia*, see indicatively: Hieatt and Prescott 1992; Priki 2009; Nygren 2015.

[9] The decorated initials at the beginning of each chapter form the phrase: POLIAM FRATEM FRANCESCVS COLVMNA PERAMAVIT (Brother Francesco Colonna loved Polia exceedingly). There is also a phrase encrypted in Polia's epitaph at the end of the book: F[rancescus] C[olumna] I[nvenit] or I[nscripsit], meaning Francesco Colonna invented it or wrote it (Kretzulesco-Quaranta 1976: 44; Hieatt and Prescott 1992: 295).

[10] The most widely accepted theory credits the work to Francesco Colonna, a Dominican friar from the Veneto area (Casella and Pozzi 1959; Brown 1996: 287–90; Menegazzo 2001: 3–47; Russell 2014: 204–28). For an overview of the authorship debate, see Ariani and Gabriele 1998 (ed. of *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*): LXIII–XC; Godwin 2004: 69–104.

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sequence of encased dream narratives mentioned above form a unit (the imaginary world) that runs parallel to and interacts with the actual world of the romance. This dream sequence may be considered both independently and in conjunction with the actual world of the romance with which it forms the wider initiation narrative. In the first case, the dream world of the romance is comparable to that of the *Hypnerotomachia* since they share several common basic elements: a god of love and his entourage, an object of desire, allegorical characters, architectural metaphors, and a first-person narrator who is initiated in the mysteries of love. In the second case, the interplay between the imaginary and the actual worlds in *Livistros and Rhodamne* is comparable to the narrative structure of Polia's story in Book II of the *Hypnerotomachia*. The writing of love letters and the encased narratives of Polia and Poliphilo in Book II constitute two further parallels between the two texts.

By juxtaposing the narrative structure of the two texts, we can discern a similar sequence of events (Table 4.1). Both stories begin *in medias res*. In *Livistros and Rhodamne*, Klitovon, the main narrator, finds Livistros wandering alone on the road in search of his abducted wife, Rhodamne. The love story of the protagonist couple is revealed retrospectively through Livistros's narration to Klitovon, where Eros mediates to create a first bond between the couple through a sequence of dreams. The first one is dreamt by Livistros and it constitutes the main ritual for his initiation. The second dream ignites Livistros's desire for Rhodamne, resulting in his quest to find her and the third reassures Livistros of Rhodamne's eventual reciprocation of his amorous advances, thus urging him to start courting her. The fourth dream signals the beginning of Rhodamne's initiation and, therefore, it only appears in the narrative after Livistros's initiation is complete. In the *Hypnerotomachia*, Poliphilo is grieving alone in his bedroom over the loss of his beloved Polia, until he falls asleep from exhaustion. The dream that ensues is both an initiatory journey for Poliphilo and a quest for his lost Polia. It is only after Poliphilo reaches his final dream destination – the island of the Cytherean Venus – and unites with Polia that Polia's perspective on her relationship with Poliphilo and the story of her initiation into love are revealed. In other words, Polia's narrative in Book II is contained within the last moments of Poliphilo's dream.

Therefore, the female perspective in the love stories is, in both cases, framed by the male perspective, which is predominant in these narratives. Moreover, the female initiation processes only take place after the male initiation processes have been completed and, in both cases, after a narrative pause: Livistros pauses his narration to Klitovon after the conclusion of his

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Table 4.1 *A structural comparison*

Livistros and Rodamne	*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*
Stories begin in medias res with male protagonists alone and grieving	
Rodamne has been abducted	Polia is dead
Introduction to new narrative level	
Livistros's encased narrative revealing story retrospectively	Poliphilo's dream narrative containing constructed 'historical' past in Book II
Male initiation	
Turtledove episode, instructive speeches, dream sequence	A series of instructive and initiatory events within the dream
Union of the protagonist couple in the dream	
Presentation of Rodamne to Livistros (second dream)	Recognition of Polia in the temple of Venus Physizoa
Questing	
Livistros goes in search of Rodamne and her castle in order to properly unite with her	Couple goes to the Cytherean island to receive the blessings of the gods of love (allegorized sexual union)
Narrative pause **Female 'initiation' and the courting process**	
Fourth dream and the letter-exchange sequence	Book II of the *Hypnerotomachia*
Actual (or pseudo-actual) union	
Political (Livistros is proclaimed co-emperor and enters Silvercastle triumphant)	Religious (incorporation to the cult of Venus)
Separation and conclusion of encased narratives	
Rodamne's abduction and Livistros's apparent death	Poliphilo wakes up to a world where Polia is dead
Successful quest for Rodamne's rescue and return to Silvercastle	Separation is final

third dream and resumes it a day later, while in the *Hypnerotomachia*, the conclusion of Poliphilo's dream journey at the garden of Adonis coincides with the transition from Book I to Book II and the change of narrator from Poliphilo to Polia. The precedence of male over female initiations in terms of sequence is indicative of the causal relationship between each pair of processes. Furthermore, the female initiations are encased in and framed by another process: the quest for the women's discovery and the couple's reunion after their separation by abduction or death.

Through a close reading of the texts, it becomes evident that the dreams and visions of women and the women's relationship with the dream lords,

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the gods of love, differ significantly from those of their male counterparts, forcing a reconsideration of whether these processes can actually be defined as initiations or whether they should be interpreted in a different way. In what follows, I will use a narratological approach informed by rite-of-passage theory to elucidate this issue by juxtaposing male and female experiences and comparing the initiation processes in the two texts. It should be made clear, at this point, that my aim in comparing the two texts is not to find a direct link between them, considering one as the source for the other.

Even though the present analysis does not suggest a direct link between these two literary works, it should also be noted that, at this point, such a possibility can neither be confirmed nor be ruled out. The surviving manuscripts and fragments of the *Livistros and Rhodamne* as well as its attested intertextual links with and mentions in texts from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century indicate that the romance was widely circulated and read, not only in the eastern Mediterranean region, but also in western Europe and especially in Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; some of the manuscripts transmitting the romance may even have been produced in Venice, such as the Scorialensis Ψ-IV-22 dated to the second half of the fifteenth century.[11] The availability of the *Livistros and Rhodamne* in fifteenth-century Italy, and possibly Venice, as well as in parts of Greece under Venetian rule along with the assumption that the author of the *Hypnerotomachia* was well versed in the Greek language, as can be inferred by his use of Greek in the book (formulation of Greek inscriptions and assimilation of Greek words and roots in his invented language) may serve as indicators for a closer link between the two works, but do not in themselves constitute proof of any direct link without any further evidence.

The analysis that follows constitutes a parallel reading of the texts aiming to bring out their shared themes and narrative strategies elucidating aspects of each text that may have been overlooked, while also exploring the interpretative possibilities offered by the combination of narratology and rite-of-passage theory.

Initiation as a Rite of Passage

From an anthropological and ethnological perspective, initiation is essentially a ritual of transition from one state to another, resulting in the incorporation of the individual within a new community. As such, it has been studied as a *rite of passage* in the seminal work of Arnold van Gennep

[11] Agapitos 2006: 67–93 and 160–233.

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as well as in the later redevelopments of van Gennep's theory by Victor Turner, who also used the term *transformation ritual* to define these ritual processes.[12] As a rite of passage, initiation is associated with a certain crisis aiming to resolve it – in the cases under examination, the crisis relates to the awakening of desire and the encounter with the erotic other.

The basic structure of a rite of passage, according to van Gennep and Turner, follows a tripartite processual scheme with three successive but separate stages: rites of separation, rites of transition, and rites of incorporation.[13] These three stages correspond respectively to the detachment of an individual or group from a previous social setting or cultural condition, an intervening transitional period, and the consummation of the passage. Given that initiation in the two texts is consciously presented as a ritual in the two texts, it is worthwhile to examine whether the above-mentioned ritual structure proposed by van Gennep and further expounded by Turner can also be discerned in the narrative structure of these literary initiations.[14]

As can be inferred from the schematic juxtaposition of the two texts in Table 4.1, the two sets of lovers go through all three stages of a rite of passage. To begin with, each character experiences separation or is affected by one just before his or her initiation commences. Specifically, Livistros is responsible for the separation of two turtledoves, by shooting one of them with his arrow causing the other to commit suicide out of grief. This incident instigates his curiosity leading to his instruction in matters of love and, later, he is separated from the actual world through his dream experience. Poliphilo is separated from Polia because of her death and, like Livistros, he is also separated from the actual world to enter a dream world. Rhodamne, through her dream, is briefly separated from the actual world and Polia's initiation is instigated by the apparent death of Poliphilo and her forced displacement from a road in Treviso to a forest during her first vision. During the initiation process, the neophytes remain in an in-between, contingent and paradoxical state – what van Gennep and Turner would define as *liminality* – and, therefore, their spatial contexts, the characters that they encounter and their own selves embody the characteristics of liminality, such as ambiguity and paradox. The initiation processes eventually result in the inner transformation of the neophytes and their transition from non-lovers to lovers or, as in the case of Poliphilo,

[12] Van Gennep 1960: 6, 89, 113 and 177; Turner 1967. [13] Van Gennep 1960: 10–11.
[14] For analogous approaches, considering ancient and medieval literature from the perspective of rite of passage theory, see McDonald and Ormrod 2004; Lalanne 2006; Reeve 2007.

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from lovers lacking a beloved to lovers united with their beloved. As for their incorporation to a new community, because of their initiated status, both couples are eventually either politically or religiously linked to a community of lovers, which metaphorically represents their commitment to one another: Livistros and Rhodamne become loyal subjects of Eros and of his Amorous Dominion (Ἐρωτοκρατία), while Poliphilo and Polia join the cult of Venus.

Initiation and Agency

Even though an initiation ritual eventually requires the conscious and willing participation of a neophyte in order to be completed, the neophyte may not necessarily be the original instigator of the process or of the crisis that leads to it. Figuring out the neophytes' level of responsibility in the development of a crisis and their level of agency in the instigation of an initiation process is important, because it contributes to the consideration of gender-related issues concerning male and female initiations and to how these differ in each text. In what follows, I will explore the issue of agency mainly from a narratological perspective and, in particular, by applying Claude Bremond's narrative logic.

Bremond proposed a structural system to analyse narrative based on an elementary sequence of three interdependent stages of a process, each having two alternatives: (1) eventuality (*virtualité*) > (2) action (*passage à l'acte*) or its absence > (3) result – success (*achèvement*) or failure (*inachèvement*). Each process is associated with specific *roles*, which can be grouped in two principal categories: *agents*, those who act or who intend to act, and *patients*, those who are affected by an action. This elementary schema may then be expanded through a combination of different processes and roles, creating a series of *narrative possibilities*.[15] In order to examine the agency of roles in regards to the initiation processes, I have attempted to code each narrative in Tables 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, following the Bremondian model.[16] In each table, the first column, 'syntax', explains how processes are linked to each other, using the following terms: simultaneity (simul.), succession (post), causality (effect), obstruction (obstr.), negative or positive means (obstacle or medium), actualization (actu.), completion (compl.), result (term.), interruption (inter.), and content of an information process (content).

[15] Bremond 1973: 131–5. [16] Bremond 1973: 309–21.

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Table 4.2 Tale of Livistros and Rodanne

Syntax	Process	Phase	Volition	Agent	Patient
Livistros as a carefree man, considered a rebel by Eros					
Initial state	Demerit	act.		(Eros)	Livistros
Livistros kills a turtledove during hunting					
simul.	Degradation$_1$	act.	Voluntary	Livistros	(Turtledoves)
As a result, the turtledove's mate commits suicide.					
compl. degradation$_1$	Degradation$_2$	eff.	Involuntary	Livistros	(Turtledoves)
Livistros is puzzled by this curious behaviour, seeks answers					
effect degradation$_2$	Dissimulation	act.	Involuntary	(Turtledove?)	Livistros
Relatives instruct Livistros in matters of love					
obstr. Dissimulation	Advice	act.	Voluntary	Relative	Livistros
content	Revelation	eff.	Voluntary	Relative	Livistros
Livistros, deeply troubled falls asleep and has a dream					
effect revelation	Amelioration$_1$/Pseudo-degradation	ev.	Voluntary (Eros)/Involuntary (Liv. Mind)	(Eros/Livistros's subconscious?)	Livistros
Livistros enjoys the meadow					
post	Amelioration$_2$	act.	Voluntary	Livistros	Livistros
Livistros is arrested by Cupid Guards and led to the court of Amorous Dominion.					
obstacle	Degradation	act.	Voluntary	Cupid Guards	Livistros
Cupid Guard instructs Livistros					
term.	Amelioration$_2$	~~eff.~~	Voluntary	Cupid Guard	Livistros
Livistros receives further instruction in the court of Amorous Dominion					
effect	Amelioration$_1$/Pseudo-degradation	act.	Voluntary	Cupid Guards/ Livistros	Livistros
Cupid Guard advises Livistros to acquire the goodwill of Desire and Love					
medium$_1$	Advice	ev.	Voluntary	Cupid Guard	Livistros

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Table 4.2 (*cont.*)

Syntax	Process	Phase	Volition	Agent	Patient
Livistros persuades Desire and Love to mediate in his favour to Eros					
$medium_2$	Persuasion	act.	Voluntary	Livistros	Desire/Love
Desire and Love intervene successfully in favour of Livistros to emperor Eros					
effect persuasion	Merit	act.	Voluntary	Desire/Love	Livistros
Eros hears Livistros petition and then directs him to the Room of Amorous Oaths to swear his allegiance					
effect merit	$Amelioration_1$/Pseudo-degradation	eff.	Voluntary	Eros	Livistros
The Seer predicts Livistros's future					
post	Information	act.	Voluntary	The Seer	Livistros
Livistros wakes up and informs the Relative of his dream					
post	Information	act.	Voluntary	Livistros	Relative
The Relative provides information about Rodamne, verifying the dream					
effect	Revelation	act.	Voluntary	Relative	Livistros
Livistros has a second dream					
post	$Amelioration_2$	ev.	Voluntary (Eros)/Involuntary (Liv. Mind)	(Eros/Livistros's subconscious?)	Livistros
Eros presents Rodamne to Livistros					
actu.	$Amelioration_2$	act.	Voluntary	Eros	Livistros
Livistros wakes up in his attempt to touch/kiss Rodamne					
term.	$Amelioration_2$	inter.	Voluntary	Eros	Livistros
Livistros in despair					
simul.	Degradation	act.	Involuntary	Livistros	Livistros
Livistros informs Relative of his intention to search for Rodamne					
post	Information	act.	Voluntary	Livistros	Relative
The Relative provides counsel					
effect	Advice	act.	Voluntary	Relative	Livistros

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Livistros embarks on his quest for Rodamne					
effect	$Amelioration_3$	ev.	Voluntary	Livistros	Livistros
Livistros and his companions reach Silvercastle					
actu.	$Amelioration_3$	act.	Voluntary	Livistros	Livistros
Eros visits Livistros in a dream, informing him he has reached his destination and promising him to shoot Rodamne					
medium	Confirmation	act.	Voluntary	Eros	Livistros
Eros visits Rodamne in a dream and shoots her with his arrow					
simul	$Amelioration_4$/Pseudo-degradation	ev.	Voluntary	Eros	Rodamne
Livistros moves closer to the castle					
actu.	$Amelioration_4$/Pseudo-degradation	act.	Voluntary	Livistros	Rodamne
The Friend advices Livistros					
$medium_1$	Advice	act.	Voluntary	Friend	Livistros
The Friend offers to get inside information on Rodamne					
$medium_2$	Benefit	ev.	Voluntary	Friend	Livistros
The Friend befriends Vetanos and the two facilitate the communication of the couple					
effect benefit	Information	ev.	Voluntary	Friend/Vetanos	Livistros/Rodamne
Livistros send the first letter to Rodamne, who initially refuses to reply, but is later persuaded by Vetanos					
effect	Persuasion	act.	Voluntary	Livistros/Vetanos	Rodamne
Livistros persuades Rodamne to send him a token of her love and to meet with him					
term.	Persuasion	eff.	Voluntary	Livistros	Rodamne
The couple meets at the forest near the castle					
term.	$Amelioration_3$/$Amelioration_4$	eff.	Voluntary	Rodamne/Livistros	Livistros/Rodamne

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Table 4.3 Hypnerotomachia Poliphili *(Book 1)*

Syntax	Process	Phase	Volition	Agent	Patient
Poliphilo is insomniac, suffering from the loss of Polia					
Initial State	Degradation	eff.	Involuntary	Polia	Poliphilo
Poliphilo finally falls asleep and has a dream					
post	Amelioration_1	ev.	Voluntary	(Poliphilo)	Poliphilo
Poliphilo wanders alone from the plain to the dark forest (asks Jupiter for help)					
obstacle_1	Degradation	ev.	Involuntary	Poliphilo	Poliphilo
Alluring music drives Poliphilo to a new space where he falls asleep under a tree					
Degradation ~~act.~~ > medium_1:	Seduction	act.		Music	Poliphilo
Poliphilo wakes up in a new space, flees from the wolf and then wanders in the ruined city					
medium_2	Intimidation	act.		Wolf/Poliphilo	Poliphilo
A dragon chases Poliphilo and he enters the portal, leading him to a dark labyrinth					
medium_3	Intimidation	eff.	Voluntary	Dragon	Poliphilo
Escaping the labyrinth, Poliphilo enters the realm of Queen Eleuterylida and meets the five senses					
effect	Amelioration_1	act.	Voluntary	Poliphilo	Poliphilo
The five senses ask Poliphilo questions, give him information on this realm and take him to the bath					
medium_4	Information	act.	Voluntary	5 senses	Poliphilo
The five senses play a sexual trick on Poliphilo					
medium_5	Seduction	act.	Voluntary	5 senses	Poliphilo
The five senses lead Poliphilo to Queen Eleuterylida's palace					
medium_6	Benefit	ev.	Voluntary	5 senses	Poliphilo
Queen Eleuterylida invites Poliphilo to her feast, and then assigns two nymphs as his guides					
actu.	Benefit	act.	Voluntary	Eleuterylida	Poliphilo
Logistica and Thelemia guide Poliphilo through the palace gardens, and then to Queen Telosia's realm					
medium	Information	act.	Voluntary	Logistica/Thelemia	Poliphilo

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Poliphilo chooses the Materamoris portal, enters it and meets a nymph (Polia)					
effect	Benefit	eff.	Voluntary	Poliphilo/Thelemia	Poliphilo
Polia comes to greet him and becomes his guide					
effect	Amelioration$_1$	eff.	Voluntary	Polia	Poliphilo
Poliphilo and Polia travel through the realm and reach the Temple of Venus Physizoa					
post	Amelioration$_2$:	ev.	Voluntary	Polia	Poliphilo
The High Priestess of Venus performs a ritual relating to the couple					
actu.	Amelioration$_2$:	act.	Voluntary	High Priestess	Polia–Poliphilo
Poliphilo recognizes Polia					
term.	Amelioration$_2$:	eff.	Voluntary	High Priestess	Polia–Poliphilo
The couple goes to the shore awaiting Cupid. Polia urges Poliphilo to explore Polyandrion					
post	Amelioration$_3$:	ev.	Voluntary	Polia	Poliphilo
Poliphilo explores Polyandrion, until he grows uneasy, running back fearing for Polia's fate					
Amelioration inter.	Degradation	ev.	Voluntary	Poliphilo	Poliphilo
Cupid arrives and takes the couple to the Cytherean island. Procession to the centre of the island					
Degradation ~~act.~~	Amelioration$_3$:	act.	Voluntary	Cupid and his entourage	Polia-Poliphilo
Epiphany of Venus					
medium	Amelioration$_3$:	eff.	Voluntary	Venus	The couple
The nymphs perform a commemoration ritual at the garden of Adonis; the couple observes					
post	Information	ev.	Voluntary	Nymphs	Adonis
Polia narrates her story					
effect	Information	act.	Voluntary	Polia	Nymphs
As the couple embraces, Polia vanishes and Poliphilo wakes up					
post	Degradation	act.	Involuntary	Polia	Poliphilo

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Table 4.4 Hypnerotomachia Poliphili *(Book II)*

Syntax	Process	Phase	Volition	Agent	Patient
Polia is indifferent to love.					
Initial state	Demerit₁	act.		Cupid	Polia
Polia becomes a follower of Diana, because she survived the plague					
simul	Merit₂	act.	Voluntary	Polia	Diana
Poliphilo is determined to win Polia's love					
simul	Persuasion	ev.	Voluntary	Poliphilo	Polia
Poliphilo tries to persuade Polia to love him					
actu.	Persuasion	act.	Voluntary	Poliphilo	Polia
Polia refuses him. Poliphilo dies. Polia hides him and runs away					
term.	Persuasion	~~eff.~~	Voluntary	Polia	Poliphilo
Poliphilo requests the intervention of the gods of love; Venus asks Cupid to look into the matter					
effect	Amelioration/Pseudo-degradation	ev.	Voluntary	Poliphilo	Polia
			Voluntary	Venus	Cupid
Cupid presents Polia's effigy to Poliphilo and then shoots it in response. As a result, Polia has a vision and a nightmare					
actu.	Amelioration/Pseudo-	act.	Voluntary	Cupid	Poliphilo/Polia
effect	degradation		Voluntary	Cupid	Polia
			Voluntary	Nurse	Polia
			Voluntary	Executioners	Polia
The Nurse 'rescues' Polia from her nightmare					
effect	Protection	act.	Voluntary	Nurse	Polia
The Nurse advices and instructs Polia and directs her to the High Priestess of Venus					
medium	Advice	act.	Voluntary	Nurse	Polia
Polia falls in love upon reflection of the Nurse's advice					
term.	Amelioration	eff.	Involuntary	Polia	Polia

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Polia returns to the temple of Diana and through her caresses resuscitates Poliphilo					
effect	Amelioration$_2$:	ev.	Voluntary	Polia	Polia–Poliphilo
The couple is chased away by the High Priestess of Diana and her followers					
simul	Demerit$_2$	act.	Voluntary	High Priestess of Diana	Polia–Poliphilo
Polia has a vision in her room					
post	Amelioration$_2$:	act.		Gods of love	Polia
The couple goes to the temple of Venus, where Polia asks forgiveness from the High Priestess					
medium	Demerit$_1$	~~eff.~~	Voluntary	Polia	High Priestess of Venus (Gods of love)
Poliphilo informs the High Priestess of his version of the story					
medium	Information	act.	Voluntary	Poliphilo	High Priestess of Venus
The High Priestess gives her blessing for the couple's union					
term.	Merit$_1$	eff.	Voluntary	High Priestess of Venus	Polia–Poliphilo
The couple kisses					
term.	Amelioration$_2$:	eff.	Voluntary	Polia-Poliphilo	Polia–Poliphilo

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The other five columns define the type of each process (Process), e.g. amelioration, degradation, information and so on; their stage of development (Phase), namely, eventuality (ev.), action (act.) or result (eff. or ~~eff~~. for a negative outcome); the volition of the agents (Volition), voluntary or involuntary actions; and the characters functioning as the agents (Agent) and patients (Patient) in each process.

To begin with, a common element in both texts is the prominence of the gods of love as the divine agents, who are perceived as the external causes of the dreams and the initiation process. Despite the fact that these divine entities are clearly involved in the initiation processes and in each couple's relationship, their agency is somewhat lessened, because of their dual capacity as independent characters and as representations of the protagonists' feelings of love and desire towards each other.

In *Livistros and Rhodamne* (Table 4.2), Livistros, by his indifference towards love (120–4, note especially the adjective ἐρωτοακατάκριτος: *uncondemned by Eros*), unknowingly provokes Eros, the all-powerful ruler of all things, who later condemns the young king as a rebel and summons him to his imperial court to be judged. From a Bremondian point of view, Livistros is a patient about to be subjected to the actions of Emperor Eros, who functions as an external voluntary agent. Implicitly, however, Livistros is also an agent, albeit involuntary, of his own initiation by means of the following sequence of actions: a degradation (turtledove incident) leading to a process of information (Livistros's curiosity prompting the Relative's instructive speech), which generates a crisis in Livistros's mind,[17] whose resolution will lead him towards maturity. Therefore, involuntarily, Livistros is no longer carefree or wholly ignorant towards love, but rather in an ideal state of mind to receive his first dream, in which he is taken to the court of Amorous Dominion (Ἐρωτοκρατία) to be formally initiated. In this first dream, Eros promises Rhodamne's love to Livistros and the latter also receives a prophecy regarding his future, which summarizes the plot of the romance.

The characterization of the initiation process in the first dream as an 'amelioration/ pseudo-degradation' (see Table 4.2) aims to demonstrate the differentiation between Livistros's initial negative impression of the process and its eventual positive outcome. In other words, to the uninitiated Livistros, love appears as a painful state to be avoided; therefore, his initially enforced initiation is seen as a degradation, but only until he completes his 'education' in the court of Amorous Dominion. Consequently, he willingly

[17] See especially *Livistros and Rhodamne* 197–8 (Agapitos): 'and even though I did not wish so, I began worrying, while my heart was preoccupied not to entangle itself in sorrow'.

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submits to Eros and embraces the bittersweetness of love as a desirable state of being. Similarly, Eros, embodying the paradoxical nature of love, is perceived by Livistros as both a degrader and an ameliorator, as is evident from the combined feelings of awe and terror that he experiences throughout the dream, especially when he encounters the Threefaced Emperor Eros (479–97), and which persist even after he wakes up (630–47).

Livistros's second dream takes place in an enclosed garden, where Eros presents Rhodamne to the newly converted lover as a gift. As an erotic space, the garden sets up the mood for the ritual, whose emotional intensity for Livistros is evident in the triple reference to the meeting before it actually takes place, beginning with the repetition of the verb συναπαντῶ ('I meet') (700–4, 713–15, 719–20). Though he refers to his encounter with Eros and Rhodamne three times, it seems that Eros is the one who sees him first, asking Livistros to approach them (721–4):

> συναπαντᾶ με, βλέπει με πρῶτον αὐτὸς ἐμέναν,
> βλέπει με πρῶτον, κράζει με: 'Λίβιστρε, σίμωσέ με'.
> Βλέπω, γνωρίζω τίς ἔνι, σιμώνω, προσκυνῶ τον·
> 'Στά, μὴ φοβῆσαι', λέγει με, 'φέρε τὰ λογικά σου'.

> He meets me, he indeed sees me first,
> he sees me first, he calls out to me: 'Livistros, come closer!'
> I see, recognize who he is, approach and bow before him.
> 'Rise, don't be afraid', he tells me, 'come to your senses'.

Livistros, Eros and Rhodamne form, in a way, a triangle: Eros is the agent of desire, who brings the couple together through an exchange of gazes and gestures.[18] Livistros's perception and experience of the dream space are mainly defined by the dynamic created from his movement towards and encounter with Eros and Rhodamne. Livistros's erotic agitation when gazing upon Rhodamne for the first time is beautifully expressed in the emphatic repetition of the phrase 'he held the maiden' (εἶχεν τὴν κόρην) followed by statements of his intense emotions (705–12). The repetitive vocabulary along with Eros' remark 'come to your senses' demonstrate the emotional reactions of an awestruck Livistros and accentuate Rhodamne's role as a sacred object that is communicated to him through the mediation of Eros. The ritual concludes with Eros formally presenting Rhodamne as the daughter of Emperor Chrysos and delivering her to the dreamer, as promised in the

[18] Exchange of gazes: βλέπει με (721–2: 'he sees me'), θωρῶ τὸν Ἔρωτα, τὴν κόρην ἐντρανίζω (725: 'I look at Eros, I observe the maiden'), βλέπεις τὴν κόρην τούτην; (739: 'do you see this maiden?'). Gestures: 720: χειροκρατοῦνται (720: 'holding each other's hand'), ἁπλώνω μου τὸ χέριν (747: 'I stretch out my hand'), Ἔρως τῆς κόρης δίδει με τὸ χέριν (748: 'Eros gives me the maiden's hand').

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first dream. The oneiric encounter with Rhodamne is emotionally charged with an intensity that eventually wakes Livistros up, leaving him in agony, his sexual urges unsatisfied (747–53).

Throughout the dream Rhodamne remains silent and her reactions are not recorded; she is only presented as the object of desire, Eros's gift to Livistros. This comes as no surprise since this is Livistros's dream, which he had before meeting with Rhodamne in his waking life. The main function of this dream is to activate and direct Livistros's erotic desire. Furthermore, given that Livistros recounts the dream after he has lost Rhodamne to his adversary Berderichos, the emotional tension that is expressed through the repetitive phrases may also be associated with his present suffering and despair, which is projected on his past dream experience.

Having been initiated as a lover and, therefore, being sufficiently prepared for this first encounter with his designated beloved, Livistros receives his second dream positively, perceiving the encounter with the erotic other, a silent Rhodamne, as an amelioration of his present state – a lover lacking a beloved. However, this is only a temporary amelioration, inciting him to go in search of the actual Rhodamne, whose subsequent initiation results from Livistros's successful quest to find her.

Rhodamne's 'initiation', contrary to that of Livistros, is not a matter of choice. While Livistros in his first dream is given a level of agency, constantly being presented with at least two alternatives, submitting to Eros or facing a miserable fate, Rhodamne does not even have a voice before Eros's violent assault in her dream, of which she is a passive recipient. Rhodamne's dream is closely interlinked with Livistros's third dream not only in terms of content, but also in terms of dream type and structure. Both dreams (892–908 and 1410–27) can be characterized as visitations, a term that refers to an oneiric or oracular visit by a divine being who gives counsels or orders.[19] A winged Eros rushes into the dreamers' space, delivers a message and then vanishes.

Livistros's third dream occurs while he is still on the road, but after locating Rhodamne's castle. Eros's visitation is brief and effective. Its purpose is to offer information, with which Eros confirms that Livistros has indeed reached his destination and that he, Eros, is about to go and shoot an arrow in Rhodamne's heart, fulfilling his promise to Livistros. Even though the intensity of the dream – clearly articulated in the urgency of Eros's movements and

[19] This constitutes one of the oldest and most usual type of literary dreams (or visions) throughout Europe, from Homer's *Iliad* to the Bible and from saints' lives to allegorical literature, such as the alchemical allegory *Chymische Hochzeit* (1616).

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words – initially upsets Livistros, its encouraging message has a positive effect on him and his companions to whom he recounts the dream afterwards.

Rhodamne's dream, of which we are informed retrospectively, would be chronologically placed right after Livistros's third and last dream. We can infer this based on Eros's message: 'as of now I am leaving you to go and shoot the wondrous maiden for your desire' (903–4). Rhodamne receives a message from Eros, ordering her to accept Livistros's love and submit to him. Note especially the use of imperatives in this passage (1414–24):

> Τὴν κόρην ἐν ὀνείρου της ὁ Ἔρως τῆς συντυχαίνει.
> ʽΛίβιστρος γῆς λατινικῆς, ρήγας τῆς γῆς Λιβάνδρου,
> δίχρονον τώρα περιπατεῖ διὰ πόθον ἰδικόν σου,
> κινδύνους εἶδε φοβεροὺς καὶ ἀνάγκας ὑπεστάθην·
> καὶ ἀποτουνῦν παράλαβε τὸν πόθον του εἰς τὸν νοῦ σου,
> ἔπαρον τὴν ἀγάπην του, δουλώθησε εἰς ἐκεῖνον
> καὶ σὸν τράχηλον ἄκλιτον κλίνε εἰς τὸν ἔρωτάν του,
> ρίψε το τὸ κενόδοξον, ἄφες τὸ ἠπηρμένον·
> πολλὰ ἐπικράνθην δι᾽ ἐσέν, μὴ ἀντισταθῇς εἰς πρᾶγμαν.᾽
> Καὶ ἀφότου τὴν ἐσυνέτυχεν, εἰς τὸ ἀπομισσευτίκιν
> Τοξεύει τὴν ἀγέρωχον στοχὰ κατὰ καρδίαν.

> Eros speaks to the maiden in her dream.
> 'Livistros of a Latin land, king of the land Livandros,
> has been wandering two years now for the love of you:
> he experienced terrible dangers and bore many sufferings;
> as of now receive desire for him in your mind,
> accept his love, enslave yourself to him
> and bow your unbending neck to his passion.
> Cast away your haughtiness, leave aside your arrogance;
> I have been greatly grieved because of you – do not resist in this matter!'
> After he had spoken to her and while he was departing,
> he shot the proud maiden straight in the heart.

The visitation is concluded with Eros shooting an arrow into Rhodamne's heart. Effectively, the swiftness and violence of the dream has a negative effect on her, as she perceives Eros as an executioner (1426: τὸν δήμιον τοξότην). She immediately wakes up terrified and calls for her confidant, the eunuch Vetanos, who consoles and counsels her. Thus, Rhodamne is able to express her reaction to the dream only after its completion, by confiding her distress first to Vetanos (1425–7, cited in the introduction) and, later, to her father (1437–9: 'A cruel bandit attacked me, | he came holding a bow and dashing forth to shoot me, | so, I woke up in terror, greatly frightened'). Her negative reaction to the divine visitation relates to her reluctance to experience the bittersweetness of love. In other words,

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she perceives her imposed initiation as a degradation – note especially the characterization of Eros as a 'bandit' (ληστής) who robbed her of something precious, namely her heart – when, in reality, it is an amelioration, as it eventually results in her joyous union with Livistros.

Despite their chronological proximity, the two dreams are separated by about 500 lines, in which Livistros digresses with an instructive speech to Klitovon regarding the Three-faced Eros and then with a description of the Silvercastle, Rhodamne's abode, before narrating his attempts to approach the princess with help from one of his companions, the Friend (Φίλος), and Vetanos, the eunuch who serves Rhodamne. These two characters mediate between the couple, delivering news, messages and letters. Rhodamne's dream is revealed to Livistros through this mediating process that provides him with access to the private life of his beloved. Thus, the late appearance of the fourth dream in the narrative relates to the fact that the story is told from the point of view of Livistros. Being placed right after Livistros's first letter to Rhodamne, a 'corrective act' which signals the conclusion of his initiation as a lover,[20] it reassures him of Rhodamne's interest in him and encourages the beginning of a new process, that of courting, which is accomplished through the exchange of letters between the lovers and the singing of songs.

The gap between the two interconnected oneiric visitations is bridged by a series of reminders to Eros's promise in Livistros's monologue and in his first letter to Rhodamne, both preceding the indirect report of Rhodamne's dream (1326–32, 1376–81, 1384–5, 1392). In fact, the last line of the first letter (1392: δίχρονον ἤδη περιπατεῖ διὰ πόθον ἰδικόν σου) is repeated unchanged by Eros in the beginning of Rhodamne's dream, thus linking Livistros's letter with Eros's message. I would also argue that the act of sending letters, which essentially aim at Rhodamne's heart, by shooting an arrow at the terrace, along with the juxtaposition of Rhodamne with a bird in the first letter (1298–1302), mirrors Eros's act of shooting Rhodamne in her dream.

The cause-and-effect relationship between Livistros's third dream and Rhodamne's dream accentuates the fact that her initiation is provoked by male agency; that is, Livistros's desire causes Eros's divine intervention. However, Rhodamne herself may also have provoked the divine wrath by her arrogant attitude towards love prior to her dream, a detail that is revealed later when Rhodamne expresses the transformative power of her dream in her first letter to Livistros (1801–8):

[20] Agapitos 2013: 405.

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> I shouted to the sky and I spoke to the clouds,
> I declared it to the earth and told it to the air,
> never to bend my neck to the bond of desire,
> and I supposedly felt successful and took great pride in this.
> But now I see that my unbending attitude has been bent,
> and I have cast aside my great arrogance,
> I have enslaved the freedom of my opinion to you,
> and what I had as my success, see, I have turned it around.

The dream is only the first step to Rhodamne's initiation, or rather, to Livistros's conquest. In order for her to yield to Livistros and embrace her new status as a lover she needs to amend her arrogant attitude (1420, 1688, 1720: κενόδοξον / 1720: ἐπηρμένον / 1738, 1788: ἀγέρωχον / 2178: ἀλαζονικόν) and change her negative judgment of Livistros (2139: ἀδιάκριτον) to a positive one (2206: εὐδιακρισία). Even though the initially painful feeling of love has been forced on her, she nevertheless retains an active role during the courting process that ensues and, to an extent, controls that process by her resistance to Livistros and her defiance towards love. Livistros and Vetanos undertake the task of persuading her: the first by love letters and love tokens and the latter by counsels.[21] It is worthy of note that Vetanos's speech to Rhodamne almost takes the form of a warning rather than a counsel, given the use of imperatives at the beginning of its first eight lines (1540–7: ἄφες / φοβοῦ μή / βλέπε μή / πρόσεχε). Rhodamne eventually gives in and admits her love in her first letter to Livistros, but then requires more persuasion for the exchange of gifts and for their meeting. Livistros must resort to extreme measures and threaten her with his death in three of his letters (2095–118, 2120–42, 2147–60), before she finally submits unreservedly to him by stating in her last letter (2108): 'You are my lord from now on; I submit to you' (Κύριν μου σὲ ἔχω ἀποτουνῦν, δουλώνομαι εἰς ἐσένα).

Rhodamne's resistance seems to add value to Livistros's conquest,[22] while also demonstrating Rhodamne's prudent character. A similar idea, valuing the pains of love, is also expressed by Poliphilo in the *Hypnerotomachia* who embraces his emotional suffering for Polia since 'what is acquired with hardship is more precious, and is held so, than that which is obtained conveniently'.[23] In order to explore further Poliphilo's hardships for the love of Polia, let us now turn to the *Hypnerotomachia*.

[21] On the letter-exchange sequence, see Agapitos 1996: 25–42.

[22] See especially *Hypnerotomachia* 2369–70: 'But you may keep the benefit that I enslaved myself to you | and through your great coercion I bowed to your will.'

[23] After White's translation, 294. This idea is in accordance to the rules of courtly love as shown, for instance, in medieval treatises on love (see also Priki 2016: 234–5).

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In discussing the *Hypnerotomachia*, it is important to keep in mind that there are two separate stories, Poliphilo's dream in Book I and Polia's story in Book II, and, consequently, two sets of initiations resolving two different crises. In Book I, Poliphilo is not a non-lover, like Livistros, but a lover without a beloved; his emotional crisis has been caused by Polia's death, and the dream is the means to rediscover and redefine himself as a lover and, in a way, to find closure. Book II, on the contrary, is the (would-be) story of Poliphilo and Polia's first meeting, Polia's initiation in love and of the couple's union in an 'actual' world, where Polia is still alive.

The narrative logic of Book I is outlined in Table 4.3, where it is evident that there are three narrative processes to which Poliphilo and, later, Polia are subjected. The aim of these three processes is the amelioration of Poliphilo's initial state – a degradation caused by the death of his beloved. Through her death, Polia becomes an involuntary agent of Poliphilo's psychological crisis, which Poliphilo's mind aims to resolve via an initiatory dream experience. It is love and the loss of his beloved that torments him while awake and, when he finally manages to sleep, it is the desire to regain Polia that directs his actions and his choices in the dream world. The first ameliorating process consists of Poliphilo's symbolic rebirth and education in the realm of Queen Eleuterylida and of his discovery of Polia in the guise of a nymph in the realm of Materamoris. The other two ameliorating processes concern the recognition of Polia and the union of the couple. When the dream ends abruptly, however, Poliphilo loses his beloved once again and, as the epitaph implies, this degradation is final.

A significant moment in Poliphilo's dream is his choice of a path in the realm of Regina Telosia. Guided by Logistica (Reason) and Thelemia (Desire), he is presented with three portals leading to three different paths of life. Following Thelemia's advice, Poliphilo chooses the middle portal, Materamoris, representing the voluptuous path. Therefore, Poliphilo, through his choice, becomes a willing neophyte in pursuit of love and pleasure and he is responsible for what transpires in the rest of his dream. Like Livistros, Poliphilo moves from a locus of instruction, where his identity is still in question, to a locus of desire, where his sexual desire is activated and directed towards his Polia. This is exemplified in the following scene.

After passing through the portal, Thelemia's kiss and the seductive behaviour of the nymphs that welcome him in the new space, activate his sexual desire. Being suddenly left alone while in this state, Poliphilo moves towards a pergola decked with fragrant flowers with thoughts of Polia in his mind. At the other end of the pergola, he perceives a group of young musicians and stops to admire them from afar. An elegant nymph

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leaves the group and comes to greet him with a lit torch in her hand; she is Polia, though Poliphilo will not recognize her until later during the rituals at the Temple of Venus Physizoa. In this first meeting, he becomes enamoured with her as if they never met before. He describes her in a long ekphrasis *physiognomike*, while she approaches him, taking his hand and joining him in his journey.[24] Seduced by her appearance and manner, Poliphilo becomes sexually aroused.[25]

The pergola functions as a threshold that will bring him a step closer to fulfilling his desire. Interestingly, the woodcut depicting this moment (fol. i3v) shows Poliphilo waiting for the approaching Polia before passing through the pergola. In this way, the pergola is what momentarily separates them and what will eventually unite them. Thus, like Livistros's second dream, erotic desire is triangulated and this occurs in two instances: first, Thelemia and the nymphs act as agents of desire using sensual stimuli to prepare Poliphilo for his meeting with Polia, and, second, the pergola provides a spatial triangulation as the threshold that separates and unites the couple; a threshold that signals Poliphilo's activation of sexual desire for the approaching nymph.

Overall, Poliphilo moves from space to space either involuntarily driven by non-anthropomorphic forces – music, wolf, dragon – or voluntarily but guided by a series of intermediary characters as well as by Polia, who, thus, become agents of Poliphilo's initiation. Even though he is mainly guided through his dream, Poliphilo exerts a level of control over his choice of path. The same cannot be said for Polia.

In Book II (Table 4.4), the main part of Polia's story presents her initiation to love instigated by the shocking death of Poliphilo caused by her indifference. The remainder of Polia's narrative presents Poliphilo's perspective when he recounts his experiences to the high priestess of Venus. Poliphilo's account fills the gaps of the story revealing the cause of Polia's oneiric experiences: a divine intervention in response to his complaint. Thus, Poliphilo's transcendental experience, of which we are informed retrospectively, is closely interlinked with Polia's initiation, in a similar way that Rhodamne's dream is associated with Livistros's third dream: male desire has a cause-and-effect relationship to female dreams.

Having freely offered himself to the authority of Cupid, Poliphilo had already fallen in love with Polia, after espying her on the balcony of her

[24] At times, his description of Polia employs landscape and garden metaphors; for example he tells us that her cheeks were 'the colour of fresh roses collected in the rising dawn' (White: 104).

[25] Trippe 2002: 1242–3 and 1247, compellingly argues that the interplay between text and image in this instance suggests that Poliphilo has an erection (especially given the position of his right hand in the woodcut in folio i7r), also symbolized by Polia's torch.

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palace. Reaching a point of despair and after an intense internal struggle, the lovesick Poliphilo decides to express his love through letter writing but to no avail. While his first two letters take the form of supplications requesting Polia's love, in the third one he becomes aggressive, accusing her of rebellious behaviour and threatening to commit suicide. Furthermore, he invokes the gods of love to assist him in his plight. Following his unsuccessful attempts to approach her, Poliphilo resorts to extreme measures with a visit to the temple of Diana to try and persuade Polia in person. In his imploring speeches, Poliphilo repeats his invocation to Cupid, calling him to punish her disobedience and cruelty (386 [A6v]: *contra te l'ira cupidanea provocando*), but eventually dies of grief at the feet of a defiant Polia. Subsequently, upon his apparent death, he is privileged with a heavenly audience with the gods of love.

The goddess Venus calls forth her son, asking him about the cause of Polia's cruel behaviour. Cupid promises to resolve the problem and then presents Poliphilo with Polia's 'true and divine effigy' (452 [E7r]: *vera et diva effigie*) as a gift, in a similar manner that Eros presents Rhodamne to Livistros in his second dream. Consequently, Cupid announces that he will grant Poliphilo's wish and immediately shoots an arrow into the breast of Polia's effigy, igniting her love for Poliphilo. This celestial event points to Polia's oneiric experiences, the cause of which is Cupid's symbolic act of shooting her effigy.

Specifically, while fleeing from Poliphilo's unconscious body, Polia is snatched by a whirlwind and transferred to a dark forest, where she has her first vision, in which she sees a vengeful winged Cupid (396 [B3r]: *il carnifice et immite fanciullo*) on his chariot and witnesses how he brutally tortures and dismembers two unfortunate maidens who, like herself, spurned love. Their mutilated bodies are then devoured by hounds, lions, wolves, eagles and vultures who are gathered there at the bidding of Cupid. The vengeful god tears apart the still beating hearts of the maidens and throws them to the birds of prey, leaving the rest for the other beasts. These violent actions could be seen as a reversal of Polia's own pitiless disposition and 'bestial inhumanity' (391 [B1r]: *O immanitate più che ferina*) towards Poliphilo's lifeless body in the temple of Diana. Polia, hidden in the shadows of the trees, fears for her own life and starts to weep bitterly, conscious of her own criminal act. Then, her vision ends as abruptly as it had begun.

Returning to the safety of her bedroom, Polia is still shaken by the terrible vision and, having trouble falling asleep, she summons her nurse to console her. Polia's next oneiric experience occurs while she is sleeping in her bedroom in the company of her nurse. She has a nightmare, in which two vile executioners (399 [B5r]: *dui horribili carnifici*) of grotesque and terrifying appearance violate her bedroom and attack her, speaking in terrible voices

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and accusing her of disobedience. Based on their description, we could identify the executioners with Sileni, mythological creatures that, along with nymphs and satyrs, comprise the entourage of the gods of love and nature in Poliphilo's dream in Book I. Given their association with the gods of love, then, they appear to visit Polia as Cupid's henchmen, carrying out his will.

As with the previous initiations, Polia's initiation is initially perceived as a degradation, though in her case this negative impression is especially prominent because of the punitive character of her first vision and of her nightmare. The latter even alludes to rape. Note especially the following two passages (399 [B4v], 400–1 [B5v]):

> finalmente (occluso et obsepto il thalamo) ivissemo insieme [i.e. Polia and her nurse] alla nocturna quiescentia . . . Ecco cum grande et strepente impeto ad me parve . . . di essere dimoti gli pessuli, et rapiti gli obiici, et da perfossori fracte le sere, et violentemente patefacti gli occlusi hostioli, et obserati limini della camera mia.

> With the bedchamber closed and barred, we went together to our quiet night's rest . . . Then lo! With a great crashing assault it seemed to me . . . that the bolts were shot and thrust aside, and the fastenings torn away, and the locks by breakers-and-enterers smashed, and violently thrown open were the closed shutters and barred doorways of my bedroom.[26]

> Incontinente in me extente le malefice et nervicose bracce, sacrilege et prophane, cum le mane sanguinarie et spurche, et pollute et perlite, per gli mei biondi capelli dihonestando ringibondi decapillandome, incominciorono impiamente trahere, senza alcuna clementia, che unquantulo in essi non era proma.

> Incontinently were reaching out to me the evil-doing sinewy arms, sacrilegious and profane, with the hands bloody and unclean and polluted and besmeared, and by my blond tresses, dishonouring snarl-full tearing out my hair, they impiously started to drag me without any clemency, of which not the least share was shown in them.[27]

In the first passage, the violation of the locked bedroom, the private space of Polia, can be associated with the imminent threat of her own physical violation, while, in the second passage, the 'sacrilege' committed by the two executioners points to sexual abuse. In addition, the way they mistreat Polia's body may again be seen as a reversal of how she treated the dead body of Poliphilo, dragging him pitilessly in a corner to hide it. Furthermore, the appearance of these executioners brings to mind demonic attacks found in hagiographical texts, where demons attempt to entice saints and

[26] White: 271. [27] White: 272.

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especially ascetics with sexual temptations.[28] While in those texts, resistance to temptation is a proof of faith, in Polia's case, redemption can only be achieved by compliance and not by resistance.

Asking for mercy and screaming for help in her sleep, Polia is finally rescued from her nightmare by her nurse, who seeing Polia struggling and turning in her bed, wakes her up. The nurse comforts her and offers her instruction and counsel, using examples and parables, while encouraging her to seek the advice of the high priestess in the temple of Venus. Evidently, the nurse performs a role similar to that of Vetanos for Rhodamne and of the Relative for Livistros: having a close social or familial relationship to the initiates, they all become counsellors and advocates of love, while they also provide practical advice for the advancement of the couple's relationship.[29]

Terrified by the imminent threat of the divine wrath and heeding her nurse's instruction and advice, Polia begins to reconsider her opposition towards love and to perceive her initiation as an amelioration. Even though it is essentially her decision, the description of the 'enamoration' process taking place in Polia's mind mostly presents her as a passive recipient of Amor, i.e. the feeling of love, with Cupid as the causative agent (412 [C3v]):[30]

> Amore dunque artificioso in questo primo moto trovando alquanto aditiculo di ingresso, inseme cum accensi suspiruli, paulatinamente incominciò a penetrare lo interdicto loco. Et cum le sue prime dulcicule facole, nel duro et torpente core quietamente nidulantise, se collocoe.
>
> Love therefore, ingenious and artful, in this first motion finding some small admittance of entry, together with slight sighs lit up, little by little started to penetrate the prohibited place, and with his first sweet flaring matches, in the hard and torpid heart quietly nesting he took up his station.[31]

Nevertheless, this 'enamoration' process could also be read as an internal thought process resulting from a series of stimuli – Polia's dream experience and the Nurse's advice and instruction; therefore, Polia could also be seen as an involuntary agent in this last stage of her initiation. Following her change of heart, Polia rushes to the lifeless body of Poliphilo at the temple of Diana and, embracing him; she unknowingly summons his soul to return.

[28] Cf. the temptations of Saint Anthony (Athanase d'Alexandrie, *Vie d'Antoine*) and the demonic dreams against Saint Irene, Abbess of the Convent of Chrysobalanton (*The Life and Conduct of Our Holy Mother Irene*).

[29] On the instructive speeches of Vetanos and the Nurse, see Priki 2016: 228–31 and 235–42.

[30] In order to describe the passivity in the process of falling in love, I am using an invented term, 'enamoration', derived from the verb 'enamour' (to be filled with love for).

[31] White: 281.

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Polia's acceptance of love and of Poliphilo as her lover is at the same time a transgression towards Diana. While rejoicing in their amorous entanglements, the couple is driven away from the temple of chaste Diana by the high priestess and her assistants because of their blasphemous and illicit acts, only to find refuge at the temple of amorous Venus, where Polia provides an apology for her former impiety towards the gods of love. This act of banishment is reversed in Polia's final vision, with Diana being chased away from Polia's heart by the gods of love. It should be noted here that parallels can be drawn between Polia's and Livistros's initiations as they are both rebels towards the god(s) of love because of their indifference, for which 'transgression' they are required to seek forgiveness and to convert. In other words, their initiations coincide with a change from a state of demerit to a state of merit in regard to the gods of love; for Polia, this is simultaneously a reverse change from a state of merit to a state of demerit towards goddess Diana.

Given that Polia's transition from a cruel non-lover to an ardent lover corresponds with her movement from one temple to another, it becomes obvious that her initiation takes the form of a religious conversion. The unfaithful Polia receives a vision and a dream by the gods she spurns, threatening her that, unless she changes her ways, they will inflict physical damage on her. As soon as she converts, she is comforted with yet another vision by the same gods. We can discern the following schema arising from this process: crisis (Poliphilo's complaint, Polia's defiance) – divine intervention that causes negative effect (physical damage, threat of physical damage, anguish, fear) – conversion – positive effect (comfort, cure). This schema is comparable to dreams and visions of conversion in biblical and hagiographical sources, such as Saint Paul's vision in the Acts.[32]

Polia's last vision resembles an ecstasy and takes place after Poliphilo's revival and their banishment from the temple and before her visit to the temple of Venus. Prior to this vision, Polia undergoes a second 'enamoration' while alone in her bedroom, which validates her conversion to love and which causes the divine vision. Polia's submission to love is described as a feeling of penetration of her soul by a host of arrows mirroring Cupid's act of shooting her effigy in the celestial realm ([C7r]):

[32] Cf. Saint's Paul's vision and conversion in the New Testament (Acts: 9.1–19 and 22.4–21) and Miracle 14 in the life and miracles of Saint Thecla, where the saint in a vision inflicts an illness on Hypsistios and then cures it to accomplish his conversion requested by his wife (Peace 1999: 17–104; Johnson 2006: 158–60. On dreaming and conversion in general, see Davis and Rambo 2009: 175–87; Bulkeley 2014: 256–70, particularly the example in 264–5.

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> Et lo operosissimo Cupidine di hora in hora successivamente acervare uno bindato et cieco disio di piacere experiva, et una congerie di sagittule certatamente penetrabonde l'alma cum maxima voluptate susteniva oriunda dall'amatissimo Poliphilo.

> And I experienced hard-working Cupid hour by hour building up a blindfold and sightless desire for pleasing, and I sustained with the greatest pleasure a shower of arrows combatively penetrating my soul, originating from my dearest Poliphilo.[33]

Her positive attitude towards love allows her a glimpse of the divine. Through her window she sees two flying chariots, one chasing the other way. The flaming chariot of Venus and Cupid chases the cold chariot of Diana, thus symbolically representing Polia's religious conversion and inner transformation into a lover. The final step of Polia's initiation is her visit to the temple of Venus, where she is granted an audience with the high priestess and publicly repents for her criminal acts towards Poliphilo, thus formally completing her initiation/conversion. The high priestess of Venus blesses the couple's union and Polia finishes her narration with a happy ending.

Gendered Desire and the Issue of Female Initiation

After this parallel examination of the two texts, would it be appropriate to say that dreams, initiation and, by extension, erotic desire are gendered in the two texts? Narratological analysis using the Bremondian model and consideration of the texts in light of rite of passage theory points us to that conclusion.

A common element in all initiations examined is that, because of the paradoxical nature of love, the initiatory experience is initially perceived as a degradation, but, upon further instruction (information processes) and reflection, proves to be an amelioration. However, in the case of the two male protagonists, the activation of erotic desire is the result of a gradual initiation process and it is closely associated with their sensual and somewhat transcendental experience of the oneiric landscape, where the eroticized setting and the presence of a mediator built up the emotional tension leading to the encounter with the erotic other, who is mainly presented as a sacred object to be praised and venerated. Once desire is activated, the male protagonists' existence acquires new purpose. From then onwards, they progress in their initiatory journeys with a specific goal in mind: to be united with their loved ones and to become whole.

[33] White: 285.

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By contrast, the female protagonists fall in love in a more drastic and sudden manner, through the unexpected and penetrative intervention of the god of love and of his supporters. Most importantly, Rhodamne and Polia do not consciously provoke their initiations or their 'enamoration' with Livistros and Poliphilo respectively, but rather retain a passive role until after their submission to the gods of love. Female initiations are governed by males (Livistros's quest, Poliphilo's pursuit and complaint) and divine agency (oneiric interventions); women are passive recipients of their dreams without voice or choice, while the language and imagery of their dreams prior to their acceptance of love point to a rather violent experience. Eros/Cupid appears as an executioner both in the sense that he is carrying out his male subject's will and in the sense that he delivers justice by punishing those who spurn love. Also, female initiation processes are complete only after determining events in the actual world, while in the case of Livistros and Poliphilo, the initiation rituals are completed within their dreams. Thus, Rhodamne's and Polia's initiations are closely connected to their courting processes, which involve acts of persuasion from the lover and his allies and the initial resistance of the female protagonist followed by the male protagonist's threats of suicide. Moreover, the women's instruction, an essential component of initiation processes, takes the form of warnings and is carried out solely by their trusted companions, Vetanos and the nurse. Effectively, falling in love is initially presented as an unwanted, terrifying and violent experience, which is transformed into a positive one through instruction and persuasion.

There are, however, some essential differences between the female initiation processes in the two texts and, most importantly, in the use of space. Contrary to Polia, whose spatial progression from one place to another is a determining factor for her change of heart, Rhodamne undergoes a transformation from one state (non-lover) to another (lover), through a liminal phase, i.e. the courting process, but without leaving her private quarters in Silvercastle. She only briefly exits the castle after she consents to Livistros's requests and declares him as her lord, that is, when her initiation is complete. The different use of space, in this respect, is significant in helping us understand the processes in question. As was discussed before, Polia's spatial progression from one temple to another demonstrates that she undergoes a religious conversion. In Rhodamne's case, I would argue that her stasis is related to her identification with the castle and that her initiation takes the form of a conquest by Livistros.[34]

[34] It is no coincidence that Livistros, in one of his letters, uses a metaphor that identifies the heart with a castle, *Livistros and Rhodamne* 1510–11 (Agapitos): τὸ κάστρον τῆς καρδίας μου μόνη νὰ τὸν

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Though belonging to Emperor Chrysos, the castle is Rhodamne's space; it encloses her, it represents her. Thus, the conquest of Rhodamne through marriage equals the conquest of the castle.

To conclude, the men and women in the two texts fall in love in different, almost contrasting ways, and their dreams strongly reflect these differences especially in terms of the spatial aesthetics, the performed rituals and the dreamer's individual perception of them. However, the framing of the women's experience within the male initiation narratives should make us suspicious as to the actual presence of a female perspective on the love story. So, to be more precise, we could say that the passages discussed here demonstrate how men experience love and how men perceive women's experience of love.

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ὑποτάξῃς | καὶ αὐθεντικὰ νὰ τὸν διαβῇς τὸν πύργον τῆς ψυχῆς μου ('that you alone shall subjugate the castle of my heart | and rightfully enter the tower of my soul'). Also, in one of his reveries about Rhodamne, his reference to the conquest of the castle acquires a double meaning – spatial and sexual – given its textual context (1654): Πότε τὸ κάστρον νὰ διαβῶ καὶ νὰ ἀναβῶ τὸν πύργον; ('When shall I enter the castle and ascend the tower?').

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CHAPTER 5

The Acculturation of the French Romance Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne *in the Byzantine* Imperios and Margarona

Romina Luzi

Among the Palaiologan romances *Imperios and Margarona* stands out for its stylistic simplicity, simple indeed to the point of being overlooked. This text is an adaptation of a French romance, *Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne* which was at the time a veritable bestseller, enjoying a success that brought about translations into numerous European languages.[1] However, it must be emphasized that the reverent approach in translating texts word by word from one idiom into another is a modern behaviour.[2] In the medieval period we are dealing with adaptations rather than translations, and the freedom with which the writers proceeded is much older than the eighteenth-century theorization of the so-called *belles infidèles*. The writer appropriated the literary work of a foreign language and adapted it to the taste of his public, thus creating a new work – not completely autonomous but, to some extent, original. The degree of employed freedom depends on the writer's aims and ability to

[1] Biedermann 1913 and the more recent Babbi 2003 are both editions of the longer version, dated to the first half of the fifteenth century. The shorter version is represented by the text transmitted by the manuscript of Cobourg, which can be dated to 1453, if we believe the final passage of the prologue: 'it was translated into this language in the year 1453 in the following manner' (fut mis en cestuy lengaige l'an mil .cccc.lIIj. en la maniere que s'ensuyt). Because of this statement, scholars have assumed that the romance had been originally written in a language other than French; Biedermann 1913 argued that it had been written in Provençal, because of the geographical setting of the plot, and Schreiner 1951: 531–53 argued that it had been in Catalan, on the basis of complex historical assumptions without solid foundation. However, the *incipit* cannot be ascribed to the first version, as it appears only in the later manuscripts. The oldest manuscripts date back to the fifteenth century, but the date of composition is unknown. The story may have been composed to celebrate the union of the kingdom of Naples with the county of Provence accomplished by Charles d'Anjou in 1264. The political legend may thus have been grafted onto the etiological foundation legend of Maguelonne (as we will see in the present study). Accordingly, the elaboration of the story seems to go back to an early period, long before the manuscripts which provide us with the text were produced; see the introduction in Roudaut 2009: 7–35. For the edition of this shorter version, see Colliot 1977 and Kosta-Théphaine 2010. From this shorter version derives the German adaptation realized by Veit Warbeck in 1527, which follows closely the plot of the French model (Bolte 1894). For the wider fortune of *Pierre de Provence*, see Schmidt 1991.

[2] The status of adaptations and translations has been discussed in Yiavis 2014 and Yiavis 2016.

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reformulate a given material in a new manner. It is clear, for instance, that the dawn of Latin literature owes much to numerous adaptations from originally Greek works.[3]

The Greek adaptation, *Imperios and Margarona*,[4] has survived in different versions, preserved in whole or in part in five manuscripts.[5] Despite the different versions, some general conclusions of the romance's character can be drawn. First of all, it is the shortest of the known romances (except for *Apollonios of Tyre* and the fragmentary *Old Knight*) with 893 lines in the Kriaras edition.[6] Second, the author-translator (the *diaskeuastes* in Greek) has made significant modifications to the story, although not to the point of rendering it unrecognizable. The story is punctuated with diverse additions and omissions, endowing it with its own characteristic ambience, clearly distinct from that of the original French courtly romance literature.[7] In the following, I shall focus on such differences in an attempt to establish the significance of changes on the level of the narrator, the narrative structure and the literary motifs. It shall be argued that none of these narrative modifications were made haphazardly, but were rather made with specific ideological and political purposes grounded in the historical situation of fifteenth-century Byzantium.

The aim of this chapter is accordingly to highlight the differences between the French original and its Greek adaptation, especially the strategies employed by the Greek author-translator to render *Pierre de Provence* enjoyable to a Byzantine audience. I also wish to contextualize the two romances against their respective social and historical backgrounds in order to highlight and explain the choices of the Greek author-translator.

[3] Translation studies is a vast field and only some basic references can be offered here: Lambert and Lefevere 1985, Bassnett and Lefevere 1990, Folena 1991, Bassnett 2002, Eco 2003, Pititto and Venezia 2006.

[4] The most recent edition is Pisa 1994. The more well-known edition, Kriaras 1955, is highly problematic, since it constructs a text on the basis of different versions transmitted in various manuscripts – thus a version that simply does not exist (see n. 4 below). In addition, there are two editions of the nineteenth century: Lambros 1880 offers an edition of the Bodleianus Gr. 287 and Legrand 1880 publishes a Ριμάδα printed in Venice in 1638. For the historical origins of the legend, see Schreiner 1929 and 1951. At times, the aim of finding historical references for names and events brings Schreiner to fallacious or far-fetched conjectures.

[5] The five manuscripts are all dated to the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, while the rhymed version is from a later period (see above, n. 3). For a description of the manuscripts and their relations, see Jeffreys and Jeffreys 1971 and 1974, dividing the tradition into two groups. Due to the complex textual situation, I will in the following sometimes refer to more than one edition/version of the romance.

[6] Beaton 1996: 138 notes that the Greek work 'is perhaps better regarded as a summary than as a full reworking on its original'.

[7] For the development of courtly literature and its social context, see e.g. Köhler 1956: 1976 (esp. 1–18) and 1978.

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The Beginning of the Romance and the Beginning of the Story

In *Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne*, the narrator plunges immediately into the narrative, telling his audience of the youth of the protagonist Pierre and of his first feats at a tournament held at the court of his father. It is there that he hears for the first time from a comrade in arms of the beauty of Maguelonne, a Neapolitan princess. This process is required by the topos of *amour de lonh*: a young and inexperienced heart is converted to love for a lady whose beauty surpasses all imagination and whose fame has spread throughout many kingdoms. After this, Pierre immediately leaves his parents in order to seek adventure, to show his valour and to make his place in the world – as well as to win the heart of Maguelonne. He eventually arrives in Naples where, during a tournament which takes place over several days, he proves his worth and amazes both the court and the princess.

The Greek narrator, by contrast, begins by announcing the difficulties involved in telling such an exceptional love story: 'How can I write the beginning, how can I achieve the splendid, amorous, great narration?' (καὶ πῶς νὰ γράφω τὴν ἀρχὴν, πῶς νά τελειώσω | ἀφήγησιν πανέμμορφην, ἐρωτικήν, μεγάλην;).[8] We may note that this topos of the narrator's inability to confront such an extraordinary matter – a circuitous way of emphasizing his own mastery – is found also in, for example, *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*.[9] Also in the following, the narrator of *Imperios and Margarona* makes common intrusion in the narrative, underlining his incompetence (the ancient topos of *recusatio*) and making metaleptic appeals to the audience, intended to draw their attention to certain passages and crucial turning points in the plot.[10] These appeals to the addressee(s), simulating oral performance,[11] develop also the motif of *paralepsis* or *praeteritio*: the narrator proclaims his wish to avoid being garrulous, but instead he says or describes what he pretends to omit.[12] We shall consider this device in some more detail, but let us first look briefly at the progression of the story.

After expressing his inability to tell the story, the narrator goes on to describe the parents of the protagonist: they are powerful and beautiful,

[8] *Imperios and Margarona* 3–4 (Lambros). For this passage, see also the beginning of Chapter 1 in the present volume.

[9] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 280–81 (Cupane).

[10] Fulciniti 1987.

[11] Cupane 1995. Cupane's study is based on the analysis of the *verba audiendi* and their use in the Palaiologan romances. See also Luzi 2016a: 76–81.

[12] See Agapitos 1991: 78–84; Fulciniti 1987: 397.

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the king is at the head of a large and valiant army – as are the parents of Achilles in the *Tale of Achilles*[13] – and both are loved by their subjects. However, for forty years (an intentionally hyperbolic number) they have been unable to conceive a son.[14] The topos of the long sterility of the parents of the protagonist, which is an insertion into the Greek text of material absent from the *Pierre de Provence*, is quite common in Byzantine literature and can be found in both hagiography and romance.[15] Among the Palaiologan romances it appears in the *Tale of Achilles*, where the parents conceive Achilles after 'only' ten or twelve years of marriage,[16] and in *Florios and Platziaflora*, which, however, has retained the motif in conformity with its western model, where the expected child is the heroine Blanchefleur.[17]

Returning to the question of narratorial intrusion, the significant presence of the narrator is specific to the Greek romance and derives from the Byzantine literary tradition – in the French romance of *Pierre de Provence* he is quite absent. That said, he does appear to signal the transition of the narration from one character to another, for example: 'let us stop talking about the king and return to Maguelonne, who was sleeping in the wood' (or laissons a parler du roy et retournons a Maguelonne, laquelle estoyt au boys dormant).[18] At the very end of the romance, the narrator emerges formulating his inaptitude to describe the joy of the two lovers when they meet each other again after a long period of separation: 'I could not voice half of the huge joy that they had, the two. I remit it in the inspiration of everyone, for it is easier to conceive than to describe' (je ne vous sauroye

[13] *Tale of Achilles* 20–34 (Cupane). [14] Pisa 1994: 16–31.

[15] In the story of Qamar az-Zamân (covering nights 170 to 249 in the *Arabian Nights*), son of the king Shâhramân, Qamar's father is an old king who yearns for an heir and finally has Qamar after following his vizier's advices, performing ritual ablutions and prayers; see Bencheikh 2005, 792–962. For the complex relation between the story of *Qamar*, the French *Pierre de Provence*, its Greek adaptation and folktales of various countries, all inspired by the plot of Qamar, see Pecoraro 1982 and 1999. Pecoraro argues that the Greek romances *Imberios and Margarona* and *Florios and Platziaflora* had preserved an older version of the eastern story, more faithful for their geographical proximity to the East, and that this ancient version was employed to adjust and adapt the French romances, which also drew on eastern folktales.

[16] *Tale of Achilles* 35–8 (Smith); on this topos, see Lassithiotakis 2001. As for the number of years, they depend on the version: Cupane 1995 (reproducing Hesseling 1919), is based on the Naples manuscript and uses the London manuscript to emend corrupt passages, here v. 37 has δώδεκα χρόνους; by contrast, the Oxford version has δέκα in v. 11, for which see Smith 1990.

[17] *Florios and Platziaflora* 4–19 (Cupane). This Greek romance is an adaptation of a Tuscan *cantare*; see Balduino 1970. The Tuscan *cantare* is, in turn, a southern adaptation of a French romance of the twelfth century, *Le conte de Floire et Blanchefleur* by Robert d'Orbigny; see Leclanche 2003.

[18] *L'Ystoire du vaillant chevalier Pierre* 69 (Kosta-Théphaine). For two more examples, see 77 and 103. Looking at all three examples, we notice the recourse to a formula that is varied in order to fit different situations.

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dire la moytié de la grant joie que ilz avoient l'ung l'aultre. Je le mectz en la cogitation de ung chescun, car mieulx se peult penser que dire ne que escripre).[19] We may observe the same narrator's discrete presence in the longer version of *Pierre de Provence*: 'now let us stop talking about Pierre, for we will certainly return to him, and turn to the beautiful Maguelonne, who remained alone, sleeping in the wood' (or laissons parler de Pierre, car bien y retournerons, et tournons a parler a la belle Maguelonne, laquelle est demouree toute seulle au boys, dormant).[20] We notice here a certain expansion of the 'formulas' in comparison with the shorter version, while the same version renders nearly word for word the topos of *recusatio* cited above.[21]

By contrast, the narratorial interventions in all the Greek versions are major. To offer but a few examples, the narrator expresses his wonder at the story he is narrating at several occasions. First, commenting on how a bird of prey snatches an amulet of great importance for the plot: 'so I want to recount the amulet, | a stunning thing, marvellous, strange, great' (λοιπὸν πρὸς τὸ ἐγκόλφιον θέλω ν'ἀναθιβάλω | πρᾶγμαν ἐξαίσιον, θαυμαστόν, παράδοξον, μεγάλο).[22] Second, on the joy for the pregnant queen after forty years of sterility:

> Τὸ τί νὰ λέγω οὐκ ἠμπορῶ, τὸ τί νὰ γράφω οὐκ ἔχω.
> Ἐψαπορεῖ μου ὁ λογισμός, αἱ χεῖρες καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα
> τὸ πῶς νὰ ἀφηγήσομαι χαραὶς τοῦ παλατίου
>
> I do not know how I can tell it, I cannot write it.
> My intellect fails, my hands and tongue too,
> in how to narrate the charms of the palace[23]

and

> καὶ τί νὰ λέγω δὲν μπορῶ καὶ πῶς νὰ γράψω τόσα,
> ἐξαπορεῖ ὁ λογισμός, αἱ χεῖραι καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα.
>
> I do not know how I can tell it, I cannot write such things,
> my intellect fails, my hands and tongue too.[24]

Third, on the indescribable beauty of Margarona, 'My intellect fails in how to praise her' (ὁ λογισμός μου ἀπορεῖ τὸ πῶς νά την 'παινέσω),[25]

[19] *L'Ystoire du vaillant chevalier Pierre* 115 (Kosta-Théphaine).
[20] *Pierre de Provence* 116 (Babbi); see also 148.
[21] *L'Ystoire du vaillant chevalier Pierre* 186 (Kosta-Théphaine): 'de vous dire la grant joye et plaisir qu'ilz avoient l'un et l'autre je le metz en la cogitacion de chascun, car mieulx se peut penser que escripre'.
[22] *Imperios and Margarona* 667–8 (Legrand).
[23] *Imperios and Margarona* 53–5 (Lambros).
[24] *Imperios and Margarona* 53–5 (Legrand).
[25] *Imperios and Margarona* 249 (Lambros).

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and even the beauty of her name.[26] In addition, the narrator frequently comments upon the narration itself in a manner that reminds of the French version cited above, for example 'let us turn the narration back to Margarona' (τὸν λόγον ἂς διαστρέψωμεν πάλιν 'ς τὴν Μαργαρῶνα)[27] or 'so now I want to narrate about Imperios' (λοιπὸν πρὸς τὸν Ἠμπέριον θέλω νὰ διηγήσω).[28] The comments concern not only the characters and the change of the narrative focus between them, but also the narration as such: 'I protract the narration, I prolong it much. | Listen to what happened and you will wonder' (μακρύνω τὴν ἀφήγησιν, πολύ την παρασύρνω. | καὶ ἄκουσον τί ἔγεινεν καὶ θέλεις το θαυμάσει)[29] and 'I protract the narration, I prolong it much, | listen about the ship, how I recount it to you' (μακραίνω τὴν διήγησιν, πολλὰ τὴν ἀνασέρνω, | ἄκουσον καὶ τοῦ καραβιοῦ, ποῦ σᾶς τὴν ἀναφέρνω).[30]

We may accordingly conclude that the Greek narrator has a much more prominent presence than his French predecessor, guiding his addressee(s) and simulating oral performance.

The Adaptation of the Plot

After the introductory section, numerous episodes from the French romance – there treated with more care and evoking a society well known to the French public – are passed over in a cursory fashion, which to some extent has harmed the consistency and flow of the story. I will present a brief summary of the plot in order to highlight the differences between the French original and its Greek adaptation.

After the opening of the story described above, the French romance continues as follows. Pierre arrives at Maguelonne's court in Naples and participates in tournaments which last for several days. The narrator mentions the knights competing in the joust and recounts their combats. Maguelonne and Pierre get closer to each other, first through the mediation of Maguelonne's nurse. They finally meet in person, but at the court they exercise proper care to conceal their feelings in the presence of others. Then arrives to Naples Jacques de Provence, Pierre's uncle, who does not recognize the hero and challenges him in spite of Pierre's reluctance. Pierre does not wish to belittle his uncle, but he defeats him in a duel

[26] *Imperios and Margarona* 295–6 (Legrand): ὁ λογισμός μου ἀπορεῖ πῶς ἔν' καλὰ γραμμένον | τ'ὄνομα ποῦ τῆς ἔθεσαν, τὸ λιθοτιμημένον.

[27] *Imperios and Margarona* (455) Lambros.

[28] *Imperios and Margarona* (697) Legrand.

[29] *Imperios and Margarona* 631–2 (Lambros).

[30] *Imperios and Margarona* 749–50 (Legrand).

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and receives the admiration and recognition of those present and also of the king. Wishing to put Maguelonne's loyalty to the test, Pierre tells her that he will travel back to his homeland to see his parents. Maguelonne's reaction is exactly what Pierre had been expecting from her: she prefers to abandon her relatives to follow him. After a hasty and secret departure in the night, the young lovers halt to take a rest during the day. Meanwhile at the Naples court, the nurse – who cannot find the princess anywhere – is forced to ask the queen about Maguelonne, but ends up having to defend herself against the accusations of helping the lovers. All searches for the couple prove unsuccessful. During the halt, Maguelonne falls asleep in Pierre's lap. A bird of prey is flying above them and is attracted by a red tissue that envelops three rings, Pierre's present for Maguelonne. The bird, who thinks the little bundle is a piece of meat, grabs it and flies away. Pierre leaves the sleeping Maguelonne in order to chase the bird. Following the bird, he gets on a boat to continue the hunt at sea, but he is captured by Moorish pirates and eventually offered as gift to the sultan of Alexandria, who, over time, comes to love him as his own son.

Meanwhile, Maguelonne – after a period of distress – decides to wait for her beloved in Provence. She sets off for Rome, and on the way there she meets a pilgrim which whom she exchanges clothes: this ruse allows her to go unnoticed when her uncle enters the Basilica of St Peter with his entourage, looking for her. She arrives in Provence, landing at Aigues Mortes (between Nîmes and Montpellier), and builds on the island nearby, Port Sarrazin, a little hospital, where she attends to those ill and in need. She also builds a church, devoting it to Saint Peter in honour of her beloved. When Pierre's parents, the count and the countess, receive a gift from some fishermen in the form of a huge fish, the countess finds the tissue with the three rings that she had given to her son before his departure. Convinced that that is a sign of Pierre's death, she goes to seek consolation by Maguelonne, who offer the countess hope and serenity, although she despairs and believes Pierre to be dead.

When Pierre obtains permission from the sultan to go back to see his relatives, with the promise of returning, he hides gold coins in thirteen barrels, covering them with salt, and embarks on a boat to Provence. During a halt at the island Sagona, Pierre goes ashore and falls asleep. The crew members search for him, but when they cannot find him they sail on to Port Sarrazin where Maguelonne's piety and mercy are well known. They offer her the barrels, unaware of their content, and the discovery of the gold coins is a great surprise to Maguelonne: she had opened the barrels to take some salt for cooking. Thanks to this donation

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she can invest in the church. In the meantime, Pierre is rescued by fishers and embarks on a ship going to the town of Crapona. There he spends the time necessary to recover and then embarks for Provence. In his homeland he hears about the hospital and the charitable deeds of its foundress and decides to receive healthcare there, before he will return to his parents.

Maguelonne finally recognizes Pierre as he is recounting all his misfortunes to her. After she has thanked God at the altar of the church of St Peter, Maguelonne, dressed in her royal costume, appears to her beloved. The reunion of the lovers is moving, and so is that of the parents with their son: Maguelonne goes to see the count and the countess, telling them that she had a vision in which Pierre is alive. She invited the parents to come to the church next Sunday, which they do – sceptical, but hopeful. While the parents are talking with Pierre, Maguelonne goes away and returns, as she had done to her beloved, dressed according to her social status. Pierre explains who she is, and the marriage is finally celebrated.

Comparing this French version to the Greek adaptation, some general differences in the construction of the plot can be noted. Imperios's father invokes the helps of learned men to persuade his son to stay at home. When the parents cannot convince him, his mother gives him an amulet that preserves him from fire, water and sword – this amulet corresponds to the rings given to Pierre by his mother. When Imperios comes to Margarona's home, the princess's father is annoyed and worried, because she does not want to marry and have an heir to the kingdom. In the middle of their discussion, the author-translator inserts awkwardly the exchange of rings between the young couple and their pledges of eternal love (in both the Oxford and the Vienna versions). Just as Imperios's father wants to act against the will of his son, likewise the king wishes to break the will of his daughter, Margarona, calling for the help of learned men, but in vain.[31] The tournament is then announced with the specific aim of finding a husband for Margarona. The young couple get married, so they do not have to elope – here again their behaviour is inconsistent. During their escape, their servant dies and they bury him. Instead of heading for Rome, Margarona makes a stop in a monastery and takes the monastic garb. When Margarona decides

[31] The obstinate attitude of Imperios and Margarona towards their parents, but also the father's appeal to learned men in order to persuade his son or his daughter, may be compared with the obstinacy of the protagonists in the story of Qamar az-Zamân (see above, n. 14): the young prince Qamar is finally confined by his father in a tower, just like the princess of China Budur by her father in her apartments. We notice the same stubborn revulsion for the marriage, but only in the female character in another eastern tale, this time a Persian story, *The Prince Qalaf and the Princess of China*; see Pétis de La Croix 2000. In this story, however, the princess protects her celibacy so fiercely that all suitors who cannot solve her riddles are executed. Qalaf arrives and triumphs.

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to build a church and a hospital in Provence, she asks Imperios's parents for permission, a detail that may be explained by a concern for verisimilitude and also as an echo of the powerful Byzantine administrative machine. When the huge fish which swallowed the talisman is caught, the fishermen bring it directly to Margarona (we may assume that the author-translator omitted the presentation of the fish as a gift to Imperios's parents, not deeming it essential). The thirteen barrels of the French romance here become three, and Imperios escapes the sultan without asking his permission. When Margarona recognizes Imperios, she shares her joy with her fellow nuns, as a pious abbess should, and she does not perform the spectacular entry of Maguelonne. Finally: after their reunion, the two lovers marry again.

After this brief survey of general plot differences, let us look in more detail at some episodes related to courtly love.

The Deletion of *amour courtois*

In the passage from the French to the Greek text, the courtly framework of the tournaments, in the French version covering several days, has been reduced to two events: one duel against a stranger at the court of Provence and another against a gigantic 'Aleman' (*aleman*) at the court of Naples, both depicted in a manner that is closer to the *Digenis Akritis* or to the hero of the *Tale of Achilles* than to a courteous knight.[32] The passage runs as follows (in the Oxford version):

> ὅλοι δειλιάζουν, τρέμουσιν κοντάρι τοῦ παιδίου.
> Εἷς καβαλλάρις ἔμμορφος ἦλθον ἀπ᾽ ἄλλον τόπον·
> ἐζήτει τὸν πατέραν του κοντάρι νἀπαντήσῃ,
> καὶ ὁ πατήρ του παρευθὺς ʻμετὰ χαρᾶςʼ τὸν εἶπεν.
> Εὑρίσκει ἐκ τὰ φουσσάτα του, ἐκ τὰς παραταγάς του
> πρῶτον κοντάρι θαυμαστὸν, φρικτὸν καὶ ἀνδρειωμένον,
> ὁρίζει τον νἀρματωθῇ νὰ ʻπάγῃ νἀπαντήσῃ
> τὸν ξένον ὁποῦ ἐζήτησεν κοντάρι τῆς Πρεβέντζας
> . . .
> ὑπάγει νὰ ἀπαντηθῇ ἐκεῖνος μὲ τὸν ξένον
> δίχως βουλὴν καὶ θέλημαν πατρός του καὶ μητρός του.
> Ὁρίζει ὁ Ἠμπέριος κρυφὰ πρὸς ἕναν δοῦλον
> κρυφὰ, σιγὰ καὶ ἀνόητα, κανεὶς νὰ μήν το μάθῃ,
> μή το νοήσῃ ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ἐκεῖνός τον ʻμποδίσῃ
> καὶ φέρασιν του τὸ φαρίν· πεδᾷ, καβαλλικεύει.
> Τότε σιγὰ καὶ ἀνόητα ὑπάγει ὁ Ἠμπέριος
> μὲ θράσος λέον, δράκοντος, ἀσπίδος βρυχισμένης.

[32] The removal of Imperios from the courtly ethos has been extensively discussed in Yiavis 2006.

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Ἐπάνω του ἐκατέβηκεν μὲ φοβερὸν τὸ ἦθος.
Ἐδώκασιν τὰ βούκινα καὶ πάντα τὰ παιγνίδια,
τρουμπέταις καὶ ἄλλα μουσικὰ ὄργανα τοῦ πολέμου.
Τριγύρωθεν ἐστέκοντο λαὸς πολὺς καὶ πλῆθος
νὰ βλέπουσι τὴν ταραχὴν ποῖος θέλει νικήσει.

All are afraid, they tremble at the boy's spear.
A beautiful knight came from another land:
he asked his father to give him a spear
and the father told him right away 'with pleasure'.
He finds from his troops, from his armies
the first marvelous spear, frightening and brave,
he orders him to arm himself and go to face
the stranger who wished a spear from Provence
. . .
He goes to face the stranger
against the will and the willingness of his father and of his mother.
Imperios orders in secret a servant,
secretly, silently and invisibly so that no one understands,
the father may not know and so he may not hinder him
and they bring him the horse: he jumps in the saddle and rides.
Therefore, in silence and invisibly Imperios comes
with the audacity of a lion, of a dragon, of a hissing viper.
He rushed at him with terrible courage.
They played the horns and all the instruments,
trumpets and the other war music instruments.
Many people and the crowd stayed around
to watch the tumult and who will win.[33]

We are here far from the courtly atmosphere of the tournament of *Pierre de Provence*: in the Greek romance the hero is valiant and vigorous, as his foreign rival from a faraway country and the 'Aleman' (Ἀλεμάνος), but without the context of the joust their deeds appear imbued rather with the warlike brutality which characterizes the deeds of Digenis and Achilles. The tournaments were known to the Byzantines: the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143–80), who had married two western princesses, is said to have delighted in jousts and tournaments, but this practice remained an elite pastime which persisted as a foreign custom, uprooted from its social context. It is not a coincidence that the author-translator justifies the second tournament in Naples, a simple duel, as a stratagem of Margarona, accepted by her father, to choose the winner of the joust as her husband – who she expects will be Imperios. In the Greek romance,

[33] *Imperios and Margarona* 90–7, 105–17 (Lambros).

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the tradition of the joust does not seem to evoke something familiar and popular to the Byzantine public.

In the passage quoted above, Imperios is described as acting 'with the audacity of a lion, a dragon, of a roaring serpent'; in his second victorious duel at the court of Naples, Imperios intends to behead the 'Aleman' and renounces only because of the demand of the king and his daughter Margarona.[34] We then observe a thematic similarity with the two texts rather than in a literal recovery of passages, as we shall see in the following examples. In the French romance, the motif of *amour de lonh* with its nostalgic and evocative echoes and descriptions, despite its brief and conventional character, succeeds in expressing the *crescendo* of passion of the young couple with the exchange of three rings under the benevolent and maternal supervision of the Maguelonne's nurse.[35] In the Greek romance, Imperios does not leave his kingdom in order to find Margarona, but because he has had an argument with his parents, who will not give him permission to risk his life in a joust. The hero is burning with a desire to face the brave knight who has come from afar, so he prepares himself for the duel 'without the consent and the will of his father and of his mother' (δίχως βουλὴν καὶ θέλημαν πατρός του καὶ μητρός του).[36] He fights and conquers the foreign knight without being recognized, as does the hero of the *Tale of Achilles*, who engages incognito for the first time in a tournament organized by his father, showing his extraordinary valour.[37] However, the two fathers react differently when the true identity of their son is revealed. While Achilles's father is proud of his son's valorous deeds, Imperios's father, divided between the pride of Imperios's achievements and the fear of losing a long-awaited child, gives a heartfelt speech to dissuade his son from undertaking anything without his consent.[38]

In the Greek romance, the stubborn conduct of Imperios, who does not yet know of Margarona's existence, appears as a childish and capricious reaction without the motivation of the *amour de lonh*, which is completely absent here. The only echo of courtly literature is the unexpected arrival at Imperios's court of the stranger who challenges a knight from Provence, already cited above:

[34] *Il romanzo di Imperio e Margarona* 367–75 (Pisa).
[35] *L'Ystoire du vaillant chevalier Pierre*, 30–46 (Kosta-Théphaine). *Pierre de Provence et la Belle Maguelonne* 22–55 (Babbi).
[36] *Il romanzo di Imperio e Margarona* 92 (Pisa). [37] *Tale of Achilles* 111–44 (Cupane).
[38] *Il romanzo di Imperio e Margarona* 116–32 (Pisa).

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A beautiful knight came from another land:
he asked his father to give him a spear
and the father told him right away 'with pleasure'
He finds from his troops, from his armies
the first marvelous spear, frightening and brave,
he orders him to arm himself and go to face
the stranger who wished a spear from Provence.[39]

Giuseppe Spadaro, who has devoted several studies to the Palaiologan romances and other vernacular texts of the same period, has noted not only the analogy of these elements in the episode, but also identified expressions and lexical segment which have led him to establish a dependence of *Imperios and Margarona* on the *Tale of Achilles* and on *Florios and Platziaflora*.[40] In particular, the dependency of *Imperios* on *Florios* plays a role in the substitution of an episode, as we will see below.

The ring that Margarona received as a pledge of love from Imperios is abruptly mentioned in the middle of a conversation with her father, who is frustrated by the obstinacy she displays against the institution of marriage.[41] The passage feels like an awkward parenthesis, as if hastily included in order to remedy the oversight of the author-translator and is absent in the rhymed version edited by Legrand. In turn, it highlights the inconsistency of the episode of the exchange of the rings, which appears rather misplaced within the narrative frame and, moreover, contaminated with a different motif. I am referring here to the change in the object, which the mother gives to the hero after she and her husband have resigned themselves to the departure of their only son. In the French romance, Pierre receives three rings from his mother as a present for his departure, which he will offer progressively as he approaches his goal(s): victory over the defences of Maguelonne's fortress and her capitulation. The first ring is given to the nurse, who has agreed to be their intermediary at a meeting in a church. In the night following that first meeting between Pierre and the nurse, the happy Maguelonne has a dream in which she meets Pierre, who offers her another ring, yet richer than the first, and reveals the nobility of his ancestors in his desire to fulfil his passion. On the following day, the prince gives the second ring – richer than the first – to the nurse at the second meeting in the church, during which they agree

[39] *Imperios and Margarona* 91–7 (Lambros); for the entire passage in Greek, see above.
[40] Spadaro 1976: 297–309. For the dependency of the *Tale of Achilles* on the *Digenis Akritis* and the resemblance of narrative elements between the two texts, see Lassithiotakis 2001.
[41] See *Imperios and Margarona* 271–86 (Lambros) and *Il romanzo di Imperio e Margarona* 267–83 (Pisa). The terminology of the two passages is very similar.

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to a further secret meeting in Maguelonne's chamber. At this third secret meeting, the young couple finally meet in person; the girl gives Pierre a chain as an eternal pledge and he offers her a ring which exceeds the previous ones in its beauty and richness, as foreshadowed in the dream of the princess. The concluding stage in the giving of the three rings, each of which is more sumptuous and precious, reflects the heightening of the emotion of love and the progressive rapprochement of the young couple.

This developing intimacy and the establishment of mutual trust, however, is completely ignored by the Byzantine author-translator. In the Greek romance, the mother entrusts to Imperios instead of these rings an amulet (ἐγκόλπιον), by virtue of which

> ποτὲ θανάτου συμφοράν, ποτὲ μηδὲν φοβᾶσαι·
> οὐδὲ κοντάρι δύναται ποσῶς νὰ σὲ φονεύσει,
> οὐδὲ ἱστία, οὐδὲ νερόν, ἄλλ᾽οὐδὲ ἀπὸ ξίφους.
>
> you will never fear the arrival of death, nor anything else;
> neither the spear can in any way kill you,
> nor fire, nor water, nor by the sword.[42]

The three rings have thus been transformed into an amulet, a transformation that can hardly depend only on the narrative economy of the plot.

Spadaro notes that the motif of the mother who gives a talisman to a son who has decided to go against the wish of his parents is used and narrated in almost exactly the same terms in *Florios and Platziaflora*, faithfully reproducing its model, a Tuscan *cantare*:[43] 'never in danger of death, you will never die | either in fire or in water or by the sword' (ποτὲ θανάτου συμφοράν, υἱέ, νὰ μὴ ἀποθάνῃς | οὐδὲ ἱστίαν, οὐδὲ εἰς νερόν, ἀλλ᾽οὐδὲ ἀπὸ ξίφος).[44] But the motif has a meaning and a function in the plot of that romance insofar as it is ultimately the amulet that will save the lovers from the pyre: a miraculous event which will be interpreted by the sultan as a sign of the innocence of the lovers, sparing them from the death sentence. By contrast, in *Imperios and Margarona* the object as such plays no role except for the role it played in the French model, where – without any magical effect – it caused the separation of the two lovers by the intervention of a bird of prey. The passage cited above is therefore a curious appearance, together with other less relevant verses of *Florios and Platziaflora*, demonstrating that all versions of *Imperios and Margarona* that

[42] *Imperios and Margarona* 212–14 (Pisa).
[43] For an analysis of the relationship between *Imperios and Margarona* and *Florios and Platziaflore*, see Spadaro 1975: 302–27.
[44] *Florios and Platziaflore* 1176–7 (Cupane).

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have come down to us are posterior to *Florios and Platziaflora*. Giuseppe Spadaro[45] and Hans-Georg Beck,[46] who accepted the conclusions of Spadaro, assume that the adaptation of the Tuscan *cantare* was realized in the fourteenth century in the Peloponnese, which at that time was ruled by the Acciaiuoli family; one member of the family, Andrea, was a friend of Boccaccio.

Since all these romances are anonymous, it is difficult to establish a precise chronology, for which reason scholars employ, in addition to the historical context, the analysis of the text itself to establish at least an internal chronology.[47] In the case of *Imperios* the episode of the ἐγκόλπιον is a clear borrowing from *Florios* and it is not appropriate to see in that replacement an influence of the Eastern tradition, as Pecoraro has argued.[48] Furthermore, *Imperios* is not the only Greek romance in which magic motifs are undeveloped, impacting the coherence of the plot. In the narrative there are several objects to which the hero does not have recourse at times when he would have needed: a golden ring he is given by his brothers, giving the power to fly; a cloak which can heal all wounds and evil; a poisonous apple.[49]

Deliberate Omissions and Their Meaning

In another part of the romantic plot, significant for the outcome of the story, namely the protagonist's participation in the tournament, the different versions of the Greek romance agree in the ekphrasis of Imperios's appearance. As he is about to face his opponents at Margarona's court, his equipment is resplendent with precious stones and gold, and his horse is richly adorned. In some manuscripts, it is even said that his helmet is decorated with the feather of a peacock. In the edition of Lambros, based on the Oxford manuscript and collated with those of Vienna and Naples, verses 368–76 offer a graceful description of the equipment of Imperios, absent in the edition of Pisa:

> κουβέρτα χρυσοτζάπωτη μὲ τὸ μαργαριτάρι
> ἐσάγισεν τὸν μαῦρον του ὡς ἔπρεπε ἀξίως.
> Ὁ Ἠμπέριος ἀρματώθηκεν ʽσὰν ἦτον μαθημένος
> ἄρματα ἡλιόλαμπρα· καθρέπτου θέαν εἶχον.
> Ἐφόρεσε ʽς τὴν κεφαλὴν κασίδιον ὡρῃωμένον.
> Κόρακαν εἶχεν ʽς τὸ καρφὶν, τοῦ κασιδιοῦ τὴν τούρλα,

[45] Spadaro 1966: 14–15. [46] Beck 1971: 142–3. [47] See Luzi 2016b.
[48] Pecoraro 1999: 530–1. [49] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1554–63 (Cupane).

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καὶ εἰς τοῦ πουλιοῦ τὴν κεφαλήν, ‛ς τὴν κορυφὴν ἀπάνου
εἶχεν πτερὸν τοῦ παγονιοῦ βαμμένον κιτρινόχροιον.
Ἐτοῦτο εἶν᾽ τὸ σημάδι του, τὸ φέρνουν τἄρματα του.

With a gold embroidered blanket with pearls
he rode in on his black horse with poise as was appropriate.
Imperios armed himself, as he had been taught;
his weapons were bright like the Sun, they had the appearance
of a mirror.
He put on his head a beautiful helmet,
on the top of the helmet, on the prominent part, it had a raven
and on the bird's head
it had a peacock in yellow dyed feather:
it was his emblem, that his weapons bore.[50]

Through this both colourful and conventional language, the author-translator suggests rather than describes in detail the richly adorned armour of the hero.

If we look at the corresponding description of Pierre in the French romance, his armour is not portrayed in the same manner. The author insists less on the aspect of wealth and emphasizes instead the fact that the equipment of the hero and the horse is dedicated to St Peter (in French Pierre):

> Et avoit appreste tous les habillements de luy et de ses chevaulx et en l'onneur du prince des apostres Sainct Pierre duquel il portoit le nom et y avoit sa fiance et pour ce portoit il en son tiltre deux clefz d'argent lesquelles estoient merveilleusement riches et avoyent estés bien composees subtillement et aussi semblablement estoyent tous ses habillemens de luy et de ses chevaulx garnis et tous couvers de clefz en l'onneur du dit Saint Pierre.

> He had prepared all the vestments for himself and his horses in honour of the prince of the apostles, Saint Pierre, whose name he went by and in whom he put faith, and because of that he wore on his behalf two silver keys, which were splendidly rich and had been well and subtly fashioned, and also all his apparel and that of his horse were similarly garnished, covered by the keys in honour of the said Saint Pierre.[51]

This substitution realized in the Greek text appears incongruous with the general character of religious ethics that it will thereafter display. I will explain below the reasons for this apparent contradiction.

Pierre never reveals his lineage, focusing rather on the demonstration of his valour in combat, even when he is constrained by the code of honour

[50] *Imperios and Margarona* 368–76 (Lampros). The rhymed version *Imperios and Margaron* 417–27 (Legrand), does not display significant differences.
[51] *L'Ystoire du vaillant chevalier Pierre* 23 (Kosta-Théphaine).

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to face his uncle, who does not recognize him and challenges him to a duel. Pierre is now known by all present as *le chevalier des clefs* – the knight of keys. According to Hugo Schreiner,[52] Pierre's emblem – the two silver keys – is an allusion to Peter II of Aragon, who was given a papal gonfalon (a banner) adorned with keys and a cross. Yet Marcel Pichard[53] observes that the privilege of adorning himself with this emblem was bestowed by the pope upon all those who distinguished themselves in the war against the infidels. Frédéric Fabrège proposes an alternative hypothesis to which Pichard also subscribes: Pierre's coat of arms would be that of the city of Maguelonne, donated by Count Melgueil in 1085 to the papacy, thereafter becoming its fiefdom.[54] Moreover, many cities and noble families adorned themselves with this emblem, claiming the protection of the apostle. It is therefore not possible to establish historical grounds for an emblem on the basis of the detail given in the text: the French text simply tells us that the key motif covered all of his clothes.

In the French romance, the protagonists explicitly mention the saint whose presence is constant, although discreet, and they frequently appeal to his protection. After Maguelonne wakes up alone and feels abandoned by her beloved, who has left her to recover the rings stolen by a bird of prey, in the Basilica of St Peter, she implores the 'king' of the apostles and asks for his help in overcoming adversity.[55] The hero performs a similar gesture: when he decides to spend one month in the hospital of St Peter, before he will meet again his parents, he swears to God and St Peter.[56] In *Imperios and Margerona*, by contrast, there is no mention of St Peter.

The absence in the Greek romance of the episode of Maguelonne's stay in Rome is revealing. The girl travels to Provence, the country of origin of her fiancé, and stops in Rome, praying at the Basilica of St Peter. She exchanges her rich clothes for those of a pilgrim. The motif of disguise is often used in adventure novels, in which heroines disguise themselves in order to travel incognito or escape persistent pursuers. In the tale of the *Arabian Nights*, the *Qamar az-Zaman*, which has been considered a model for the French romance, the heroine Boudur, who loses trace of her husband Qamar, also in search of a bird, disguises herself in Qamar's

[52] Schreiner 1929 and 1951. [53] Pichard 1952.
[54] Pichard 1952: 85 and n. 5 with a reference to Fabrège (*Histoire de Maguelone*, vol. I, Paris-Montpellier 1894), whose work has remained inaccessible to me.
[55] *L'Ystoire du vaillant chevalier Pierre* 85 (Kosta-Théphaine); *Pierre de Provence* 130 (Babbi).
[56] *L'Ystoire du vaillant chevalier Pierre* 107 (Kosta-Théphaine); *Pierre de Provence* 174 (Babbi).

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clothes to make her journey easier.[57] This episode is completely absent from the Greek romance and is replaced with another, just like the description of Imperios's equipment discussed above. In *Imperios and Margarona*, the heroine's stay in Rome and her exchange of clothes with a poor pilgrim is transformed into Margarona's stay in a monastery – Rome has been erased from the story. In both texts, the Greek and the French, the protagonist founds a monastery; yet only in the Byzantine romance is it explicitly stated that Margarona wears the veil and becomes an abbess (ἡγουμενίσσα) in a small community in Provence, while in the French romance Maguelonne devotes her life to the poor and the sick as in a kind of beguinage.

The omission and substitution of objects related to the figure of St Peter and Maguelonne's stay in Rome, as well as the greater accentuation of some religious elements already considerable in the French romance, cannot be explained in terms of narrative simplification or the change of patterns to fill a void in the Greek text – these changes are NOT insignificant. The Greek writer has a definite purpose: the suppression of all mention of the saint, a form of *damnatio memoriae*. As we shall see, the nature of the substitutions made by the Byzantine author-translator and the fact that the legend of Imperios and Margarona is linked to the foundation of the Monastery of Daphni, whence it probably circulated thereafter, makes it highly probable that the author-translator (at least the authors of the versions available to us, all agreeing in this part of the plot), was very close to those elements in Greek society hostile to the unionist party. The Great Schism, which involved liturgical and theological as well as political questions, dates back to the ninth century with the election of Photios as patriarch of Constantinople. If the controversy at first was rather a contrast that ended with the death of the affected parties, it thereafter began to represent an increasingly irrecoverable fracture, when the papacy turned even more intransigent in establishing his supremacy over the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Byzantine emperors were willing to pledge submission to the pope in return for the help of western troops against the enemies who threatened the Empire: Michael VIII Palaiologos, whose logothete George Akropolites subscribed to the pope's primacy and abode by Roman faith in the Council of Lyon (1274), and thereafter

[57] On Qamar az-Zaman, see above, n. 14. Women in male disguise as a way to travel safely and minimize the dangers of a long journey is a motif not only in romances but also in hagiography, where this deceit may allow the heroine to even live in a male monastery; see Delcourt 1958 and Talbot 2009 on Christina of Markyate. On shared motifs between romance and hagiography, see Chapter 11 in the present volume.

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John VIII, who personally travelled to the West and went to Ferrara to preside over the council that ended in Florence on 6 July 1439. Nevertheless, each time a part of the clergy and the people resisted, nullifying all negotiations undertaken by the emperors. In fact, the more the situation became dramatic for the very existence of the empire, the more the Byzantines barricaded themselves with their religious identity.[58]

While the period of the redaction of the French romance and thus of the Greek is not precisely determined, it is indisputable that *Pierre de Provence* is a late specimen of a genre nostalgic of the chivalric past. In this regard, Anna Maria Babbi observes that:

> come ricorda Mario Rocques, l'autore del *Pierre de Provence* sembra essere « plus curieux des restes brillants de la chevalerie que pénétré vraiment d'idées chevaleresques ». Atteggiamento del resto che è riconducibile a molta letteratura francese del Quattrocento che tentava di ristabilire un tempo trascorso ormai idealizzato e irraggiungibile, o meglio raggiungibile solo attraverso la finzione letteraria. Lo iato temporale che lo separa dai romanzi arturiani ha fatto sfumare il profondo e seducente mondo cavalleresco mettendone in risalto solo l'apparenza, facile di accesso, e banale.[59]

When the drafting of the Greek adaptation occurred, the schism between the eastern and the western churches had become irremediable. According to Kostas Yiavis, *Imperios* was 'composed at the end of the Middle Ages (and beyond)'[60] from a French model which was a later product of courtly literature and marked by a more popular character; he proposes that *Imperios* was adapted for the urbanized middle classes and he questions rightly the commonly accepted designation of 'chivalric' for *Imperios* and, more generally, the other Greek romances. Or rather, we can allow this definition as a conventional definition for denoting a literary product very distinct from the French romances.

The story of *Imperios and Margarona*, as transmitted by all the Greek versions handed down from the different manuscripts, enjoyed great popularity, the best evidence of which is not only the rhymed version edited in Venice, but the enduring legend that emerged from the key motifs of the separation of lovers and the barrels hiding treasures. Nikos A. Bees, a Greek scholar who wrote a study on the Greek romance which is a gold mine of information, listened to folktales in Athens, Arcadia, Monemvasia and Mystra – tales in which he recognized the story of Imperios.[61] In Crete (Gaudos), Bees came across a tale in which the

[58] See Ostrogorski 1996 : 252–266, 483–489 and 583–586. [59] Babbi 2003: xi.
[60] Yiavis 2006: 200. [61] See Bees 1924: 49–50.

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protagonists are the daughter of a Frankish king and the head of customs officers of Constantinople: in this story the object causing the separation of the couple is a snuff box (νταμπακέρα) discovered under a tree, just like in the Arabic tale. It may of course be argued that certain common features are too trivial to demonstrate any affiliation between the Byzantine romance and successive storytelling, but in one specific case the similarity is more pronounced and the site where the legend circulated is, as we shall see, not without importance.

After the Fourth Crusade and the conquest of Attica by Otto La Roche, the Orthodox Monastery of Daphni was given in 1207 to the Cistercians of Provence, who occupied it until 1412 or maybe 1456–8, that is, shortly after the beginning of the Ottoman era.[62] It is not impossible, according to Nikos A. Bees, that the religious order may have retained control of the monastery for some time after the Fall of Constantinople. In addition to the deep influence of these French monks on the architecture of the Daphni complex, they transplanted the legend of the founding of the church of St Peter and Paul from the region south of Montpellier to the Sarrazin Port. In the Provencal church there was a marble sarcophagus in which, according to legend, the remains of Maguelonne were held. In reality they are the remains of a cardinal of the fifteenth century.[63]

It is interesting to note that this legend, which originated in Provence and gave a certain aura to the church dedicated to St Peter in Port Sarrazin, was so successful in Attica that, according to the testimonia collected by Bees, nobody remembered its true origin; they were all convinced of the indigenous origin of this legend. Obviously, the elimination of any precise reference to Provence contributed to no small extent. As underlined by Bees, the retained elements and patterns are characteristic of folktales and common to many stories and legends from various parts of the western and eastern world. One of the popular legends that Bees cites concerns the foundation of the cloister of Daphni, a village between Athens and Eleusis. This legend was transmitted, we are told, by the Archbishop of Mantineia, who for his part first heard it from the mouth of his mother Sophia, a woman from the popular class of Athenian society. In this version, the conclusion is rather surprising in comparison to the conventions of this kind of love story: the couple, who eventually find each other, end their days living with a hermit, with whom the girl had found refuge and comfort during the disappearance of her beloved, and with whom she

[62] Heers 2007: 125–6.
[63] See Bees 1924 on this legend and its link with the monastery of Daphni, see 52–60.

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shares the monastic life, using the wealth of three hidden barrels to build the monastery of Daphni. The trace of this legend is confirmed by two references to the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries respectively, exhaustively referred to by Bees.[64] If this legend reported by Bees really circulated around Athens, it reflects the emphasis placed within the Greek territory on the religious aspect of life. However, the Greek romance – respecting the conventions of the genre – allows the protagonists to get married.

This is another aspect that made the heroes even more pure and blameless than their French counterparts: they were only engaged in the French romance, but married in the Byzantine version. A further difference between the two romances is not without consequence: at the end of *Imperios and Margarona*, the protagonists, finally together, celebrate the wedding again with sumptuous feasts, according to the hyperbolic taste of our author-translator. One may indeed wonder why the author added a second marriage. Carolina Cupane has noted that according to Byzantine custom, a marriage celebrated without parental consent had no legal value.[65] In the Greek romance *Florios and Platziaflora*, the couple is married by the Emir and then again by the parents of Florios – a fact of which the author-translator may have been aware. It is also possible that the author-translator, appearing to forget that the couple were already married, wanted to conclude the romance with a marriage, as the genre requires.

Concluding Remarks

The respectful attitude and religious sensitivity that mark the Greek versions seem to indicate that the author-translator – or at least the composer of the story which has come down to us through all the versions which correspond more generally in the passages or word for word – was, if not a member of the Greek clergy, then at least someone very close to this milieu, sharing its aims and values. In this manner refined and transformed – rendered harmless, as it were – the narrative of *Imperios and Margarona* became a perfect uplifting example of a devout and honest Orthodox couple, worthy of establishing and founding a monastery. By contrast, all the elements which might have been overly disturbing for the Byzantine audience were eliminated or neutralized. Elements too far from the recipient culture and its *Weltanschauung*, which would simply not be understood or appreciated, were erased. The concept of courtly love, for

[64] Bees 1924: 55–7. [65] Cupane 1995: 564, n. 106.

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instance, was no longer relevant: in the West it had been celebrated through tournaments in which the hero, thanks to his valour, would win the heart of the heroine – a necessary part of the development of feelings between the protagonists; in the East it had no relevance and was removed from the plot.

The Byzantine audience, as is true of the Middle Ages in general, probably did not expect a total expatriation of the story, but a recognizable and exciting product. In order to satisfy this desire, the author-translator produced a domesticated work: one which partly erased the impression of strangeness which a more faithful adaptation (in the modern sense) would have produced. As discussed above, the religious aspect was to be more pronounced in the Greek romance than in the French story, where it appeared but on a more superficial level. Moreover, the removal of the figure of St Peter, the illustrious saint absent in the Greek romance, should be seen as a sign of hostility towards the brutal Latin conquerors who brought areas of Byzantine territory under their domination, after the perversion of the original spirit of the Fourth Crusade (1204),[66] reflected not only in their customs and their laws but also in their religion which they intended to impose with the primacy of the papacy on the Orthodox. This 'translation' of *Pierre de Provence* may accordingly have been the work of an author, and intended for a public, for whom 'the Turkish turban was preferable to the Roman tiara', at the decisive moment when Ottoman pressure presented the Byzantines with the dilemma of whether to submit themselves to the demands of the pope or to face this mortal threat on their own.

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[66] On the last two centuries of Byzantium from the perspective of the Latins and the Crusaders, see Heers 2007.

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CHAPTER 6

Chronotopes between East and West in Apollonios of Tyre

Francesca Rizzo Nervo

Mikhail Bakhtin's essay, 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel' (written in 1937–8, but published in the then USSR in 1975 with added final observations), undoubtedly represents a milestone in western literary criticism. Translated in France in 1978, in Italy in 1979 and in the United States in 1981, the book opened up a new field of studies. Although it was not always followed up consistently, and although it has often been either misread or misunderstood, Bakhtin's essay marked an important advancement in the understanding of the literary text. Ever since its publication, important contributions have enriched and, on occasion, progressed beyond Bakhtinian hypotheses.

As early as 1963 the Italian semiotician Cesare Segre had, independently of Bakhtin, identified the importance of integrating the concept of time in the analysis of a literary work:

> esigere . . . una descrizione critica dell'opera che integri la nuova dimensione alla tre tradizionali. Ciò significa tener conto del tempo (della storia), ma nel suo aspetto di dimensione dell'opera; intendere l'opera d'arte, insomma, come un *cronòtopo*.[1]

Bakhtin himself, in the very opening of his essay, maintained:

> We do not pretend to completeness or precision in our theoretical formulations and definitions. Here and abroad, serious work on the study of space and time in art and literature has only just begun. Such work will in its further development eventually supplement, and perhaps substantially correct, the characteristics of novelistic chronotopes offered by us here.[2]

And Segre, for his part, noted that Bakhtin's typology offered an open taxonomy: 'la tipologia dei cronòtopi fornita da Bakhtin è una tassonomia aperta (per fortuna)'.[3]

[1] Segre 1969: 28. The essay (1963) was first published in 1965. [2] Bakhtin 1981: 85.
[3] Segre 2001: 272.

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In the first place, it should be clarified that, for Bakhtin, the understanding of the chronotope of a text does not come about by means of the simple *description* of its temporal scores, together with the spaces represented. This is, at best, a possible starting point of the research. What should be studied is the way in which the spatiotemporal nexus is constructed *artistically*; that is, how the real nexus is transfigured and what this transfiguration means according to the interpretation of the text. As a result, in order to interpret a text it is necessary to take into account the inextricability of the spatiotemporal nexus, and to attempt to understand the 'emotions and values' that it brings[4] and 'the human image' it constructs.[5] Whereas it is true that meaning is constructed by space, it does not follow that time plays no role as a describing factor. On the other hand, it would be somewhat reductive to identify the idea of the chronotope as elaborated by Bakhtin with a 'unilinear' conception of time itself. It is not by accident that, in the examination of the chivalric romance, the Russian scholar refers to the subjective playing with time and space, a violation of the most elementary spatial and temporal relationships and perspectives.[6]

There are some aspects in which there has been an enrichment of the Bakhtinian perspective together with an overcoming of some rigidities in his model. For example, the guiding principle of the chronotope is not always time; it can also be space, since the relationship between the type of chronotope and the literary genre cannot be defined in deterministic terms.[7] Bakhtin's analysis is open to further investigation, but this critical level, obviously supplemented by others, can contribute to a wider interpretation of the texts. As is often the case, though Bakhtin's interpretive approach has struggled to gain ground in classical studies,[8] it has remained virtually absent in Byzantine studies.[9] My aim in this chapter is to verify the usefulness of the definition of the chronotope with reference to a medieval Greek text, starting from the many rewritings of a late antique text in various literary areas.

Passed down through many codices beginning from the ninth century on, the *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri* – *Apollonius King of Tyre* – is a

[4] Bakhtin 1981: 243. [5] Bakhtin 1981: 104–5. [6] Bakhtin 1981: 155.
[7] See Pioletti 2014a: 253–81.
[8] See, for example, Fusillo 1989: 213–19, 1996 and 2016, Branham 2002 and 2005, Kim 2008 and Beaton 2010.
[9] Only a few scholars have used the Bakhtin's interpretive approach to texts; see MacAlister 1996, Moennig 1999, Boghart and De Temmerman 2010, Rizzo Nervo 2010 and 2014, Beaton 2012, Carbonaro 2014, Cupane 2014, Luciani 2014, Roilos 2016.

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Christianized form dating back to the end of the fifth century or the beginning of the sixth of an originally Greek novel of the third century.[10] It has been defined as the *summa* of the Hellenistic novel,[11] but also as an intermediary text between classical culture and the medieval horizon.[12] It has certainly proven such in its reception because of the many versions in European literatures that have derived from it directly or in mediated form.[13] These are a privileged observatory for testing the potential of a critical approach to texts that takes as its point of departure Mikhail Bakhtin's study on the chronotope.

If some texts of the western area – French, Spanish and Italian – have been the object of study from this point of view, the same cannot be said of the Greek–Byzantine area. Two works are derived from the *Historia*: first, the *Story of Long-Suffering Apollonios of Tyre* (*Διήγησις πολυπαθούς Απολλωνίου του Τύρου*), probably of the mid-fourteenth century and passed down in a manuscript of the sixteenth century and derived from the *Libro d'Apollonio*[14] (a Tuscan vulgarization) and, second, the *Rimada*, composed in Crete at the beginning of the sixteenth century and deriving from the *Cantari di Apollonio* by Antonio Pucci. The present paper will only deal with the former.[15] After a brief summary of the results obtained up until now in the studies on the chronotope of the Latin *Historia* and certain romance versions, I will seek to identify the chronotope of the Greek medieval *Apollonios of Tyre*, starting from the differences between this last and its Italian 'source'.

It does not appear to be redundant here to recall what Bakhtin means by literary chronotope:

> We will give the name *chronotope* (literally, 'time space') to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature ... We understand the chronotope as a formally constitutive category of literature ... In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes

[10] The bibliography on the *Historia* is extensive. I will limit myself to indicating some fundamental studies: Archibald 1991, Kortekaas 1984, 2004 and 2007, Panayotakis 2012.

[11] Chiarini 1983: 285–6. [12] Pioletti 1995: 16.

[13] A list of the Latin and vernacular versions deriving from the *Historia* and one of the medieval and Renaissance allusions to the story of Apollonius are found in Archibald 1991: 182–233.

[14] This is the title of the text in the manuscript, correctly maintained by the latest editor, Sacchi 2009 from which I quote here. In the previous edition, Del Prete 1861, the title by which the text was known is *Storia d'Apollonio di Tiro*.

[15] The most recent edition of the Greek medieval and modern texts that narrate the story of Apollonios is by Kechagioglou 2004, from which I quote here.

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> artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. The intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope.[16]

The *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri* and Its Chronotope

Despite the fact that is has the same literary status as the ancient Greek novel, the *Historia* stands out because of some variations made in its narrative sequences. As is well known, the adventure novel of ordeal narrates a love story in which two youngsters meet, fall in love, are separated and undergo many vicissitudes before meeting in a happy ending that sees the couple reunited. The driving force of the action is the falling in love of the two youngsters.

In the *Historia*, too, it is love that puts the story in motion; not, however, the love between two youngsters, although this episode certainly plays a role in the story, but the incestuous love of a father for his daughter. As a motif, incest has a structuring function. Its presence or absence determines the unfolding of the action, because the rejection of exogamy is closely associated with the motif of sovereignty. The amorous discourse woven in the story is a discourse of incest. Whereas Antiochus's[17] is consummated, Apollonius's is first repressed (he entrusts his daughter Tarsia to his friends, saying that he will be back when she comes of age to be married), then avoided (in the scene of the final recognition), a discourse of love that evolves in parallel fashion with the events concerning the protagonist Apollonius.[18]

The text, which opens in a fairy-tale style with the 'once upon a time' like formula 'There was once in Antioch a . . . king' (Ανέστη εν Αντιόχειᾳ . . . άναξ), develops into five narrative sequences: background, marriage, obstacles, reunion, final solution.[19] In the background, Apollonius sees himself forced to flee for having solved the riddle set by Antiochus that contains an indication of his incestuous relationship with his daughter. He returns then to Tyre, and from there he heads first to Tarsus and then to Cyrene following a shipwreck. Here the second narrative sequence begins, that relating to the marriage. Apollonius marries the daughter of the king of Cyrene, Archistratis. On hearing the news of Antiochus's death, the couple

[16] Bakhtin 1981: 84.
[17] Proper and geographical names change from the Latin to the Greek, through the Italian version. I chose to preserve them in the form in which they appear in each version.
[18] See in this regard Rizzo Nervo 1992: 115.
[19] See the analysis of the narrative structure in Rizzo Nervo 1992.

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sets off in order to take possession of the realm. The subsequent sequence (obstacles) is doubled in reference to the figures of the wife and the daughter of Apollonius.[20] During the journey, Archistratis gives birth, is believed to be dead and is abandoned in the sea in a coffin. The coffin reaches Ephesus where Archistratis is brought to life by a physician and enters the temple of Diana as a priestess. The daughter of Apollonius, Tarsia, is instead taken by her father to Tarsus and is entrusted to a couple of friends together with her wet nurse. On the death of the wet nurse, the woman to whom she has been entrusted orders that she be killed. However, Tarsia is kidnapped by pirates and sold to a pimp in Mitylene. Apollonius, who after having left his daughter had wandered aimlessly, returns to Tarsus where he learns of her death. He decides to return to Tyre, but a storm drives him to Mitylene. The fourth narrative sequence, the reunion, is also doubled. In Mitylene, Apollonius finds his daughter again and they leave for Tyre, together with the prince of the city to whom he has given her as bride. In Ephesus, in the temple of Diana where they go on the orders of an angel, they find Archistratis again. The family, now reunited, travels towards Cyrene and stops at Tarsus where Apollonius avenges himself on the couple to whom he had entrusted Tarsia. In the happy ending, Apollonius reigns over Tyre, Antioch and Cyrene.

It appears evident, even given the brevity of the summary, how significant the motif of the journey is in the *Historia*. It is precisely in the transitions from one narrative sequence to another that it becomes a metaphor for a progress that marks the entire narration. This is not to be found in the other Greek adventure novels of ordeal, where whatever happens between the beginning and the end of the story separates two biographical moments of the protagonists, but, to use Bakhtin's words:

> The gap, the pause, the hiatus that appears between these two strictly adjacent biographical moments and in which, as it were, the entire novel is constructed is not contained in the biographical time-sequence, it lies outside biographical time; it changes nothing in the life of the heroes, and introduces nothing into their life . . . there is a sharp hiatus between two moments of biographical time, a hiatus that leaves no *trace* in the life of the heroes or in their personalities.[21]

The novel indeed is not limited to having as protagonists a couple but rather is the story of the vicissitudes of an entire family, which, after having been divided, is reunited in the happy ending. The recognition of this

[20] For other analogies and similarities with reference to Archistratis and Tarsia, see Panayotakis 2002.
[21] Bakhtin 1981: 89–90.

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element leads us to think in particular of the narrative frame of the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitiones*[22] where 'the events give the appearance of being stretched along the real time-line of the heroes' lives and of effecting change in both the heroes and in the events (the key events) of their lives'.[23] Apollonius, in particular, from *adoliscens Tyrius, patriae suae princeps*, is transformed in the end into a mature sovereign. He will reign into old age over three realms with wisdom, after having gone through and overcome the ordeal of incest.

The most recent studies on the chronotope have confirmed and developed what Bakhtin states regarding the presence of minor chronotopes:

> We have been speaking so far only of the major chronotopes, those that are most fundamental and wide-ranging. But each such chronotope can include within it an unlimited number of minor chronotopes; in fact . . . any motif may have specific chronotope of its own. Within the limits of a single work and within the total literary output of a single author we may notice a number of different chronotopes and complex interactions among them, specific to the given work or author; it is common moreover for one of these chronotopes to envelope or dominate the others.[24]

It is therefore preferable to talk of a *chronotopic system*[25] of the texts rather than of a chronotope. The chronotope of the adventure novel of ordeal, i.e. 'an alien world in adventure time', for Bakhtin himself the most abstract of all novelistic chronotopes,[26] unfolds in the *Historia* in a complex chronotopic system that mirrors the composite nature of the text.

Already identified as minor chronotopes are the *folk–mythological* (incest), *elegiac–amorous* (falling in love, the pains of love), *epic* (storms, shipwrecks, abductions), *rhetorical–consolatory* (reasoning on events), the *agnition* (the final recognitions), and as principal chronotope, 'the family and the realm in biographical time'. This is a definition that accurately acknowledges the two significant spheres, the spaces one might say, in which the protagonists move in the social world, as well as the structuring function of the incest motif – a threshold not to exceed, according to Antonio Pioletti:

> il tempo biografico accomuna nella stessa sorte il destino della famiglia e quello del regno: il disgregarsi e riaggregarsi della prima comporta e presuppone la perdita e la riconquista del secondo. L'inferno dell'incesto è la soglia da non superare.[27]

[22] See Goepp 1938. [23] Bakhtin 1981: 90. [24] Bakhtin 1981: 252.
[25] The definition is from Pioletti 2010: 98. [26] Bakhtin 1981: 110.
[27] Pioletti 2009: 166. Another study that sets out to define the chronotope of the *Historia* is by Fernández-Savater Martín 1994. The scholar limits herself to a description of the temporal

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The Chronotope of the Romance Versions

The romance reworkings of the *Historia* in the western area that up until now have been studied in this light, though having their differences, are characterized as being those that introduce greater and more significant changes in the story. They in essence maintain its *fabula* and its basic structure and intervene for the most part in the fabric of the story. They introduce or suppress details, they cut or add scenes, they adapt themselves inevitably to the different environments of production and – case in point – they assume their own spaces and times, thus their chronotope is modified.

Reference will be made here, in very synthetic terms, in particular to the medieval Castilian *Libro de Apolonio* (end of the twelfth, beginning of the thirteenth centuries); to the French medieval versions of the fourteenth century (the versions of Brussels and Vienna); to the *Cantari di Apollonio di Tiro* by Antonio Pucci (fourteenth century) and to the *Patraña oncena del Patrañuelo* by Joan Timoneda (sixteenth century). The *Libro de Apolonio* appears to be characterized by an adventurous hagiographic chronotope that inscribes the adventures in a 'religious–eschatological' dimension.[28] The medieval French versions – whose discrepancies concern the function of the incest and the greater space given to the amorous theme in the Brussels version – in their moving away from the *Historia* accentuate its epic dimension and both manifest a dominant chronotope of the epic–chivalrous type.[29] In the *Cantari* the chronotope of Fortune manifests itself as dominant, though it is present as topos in the other versions,[30] while in the *Patraña* the dominant chronotope is that of the realm and the lineage in the time of Providence, with emphasis given to the celebration of a specific example of sovereign.[31]

The Story of Long-Suffering *Apollonios of Tyre*

The version from which the Greek *Apollonios of Tyre* seems to derive – though not necessarily the text that has come down to us – is, as mentioned above, the *Libro d'Apollonio*, a Tuscan version of the fourteenth century which presents some common innovations with regard to the Latin text. These are literal correspondences, or almost such, as far as the names of characters are concerned, sometimes only of the Italian version.

dimension of the text in reference to the protagonist Apollonius. It is not sufficient for interpreting its chronotope.

[28] Lalomia 2012. [29] Pioletti 1995: 18–23 and 2012b. [30] Pioletti 2012c.

[31] Pioletti 2012d.

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Instead, at least two calques on the Italian and two lessons can be explained as erroneous interpretations of the source text.[32] Last but not least, it is the romance that least indulges in changes with reference to the *Historia*. In general the Greek author considerably abbreviates his model by eliminating entire episodes, compressing scenes, suppressing repetitions, descriptions, stories, monologues, details and synthetically paraphrasing some parts. The most significant differences between the two texts have already been variously identified,[33] and I will limit myself to picking up on those which, by dint of their influence on the representation of space and time, prove to be useful in identifying the work's chronotope.

The times and the spaces introduced in the Greek *Apollonios of Tyre* are apparently those of the *Historia* and of the Italian version. The most significant spaces are those of the city and the sea: the city with its square, the interiors of the homes and palaces, its brothel, the city-place where the action takes place and the sea which unites the cities and on whose coast some of the narrated events take place.[34] The time is a linear time that accompanies the unfolding of events with precise indications. Apollonios has twenty days to solve Antiochos's riddle. He stops first in Tarsos for a few months and on leaving he is shipwrecked within two days. Archistratousa, his wife, becomes pregnant just a few days after the wedding and gives birth seven days into the voyage due to the fright caused by a storm. Tarsia's wet nurse dies after fourteen years. Tarsia's life in the brothel passes by, for the most part, with her nights spent defending her virginity by getting the men to pity her and her mornings spent delivering the money earned to the pimp and so on. It is nevertheless a time that, as it passes, leaves its mark on the characters, unlike in other Greek novels.

Surprisingly for a text that makes synthesis its guiding principle, there are some additions that in a certain sense can be defined as monothematic. I refer to those discrepancies with the Italian text that, together with others, make us think of a re-Christianization of the model.[35] Among these, some make sense if read from the point of view of defining the chronotope of the text. Already in the title of the manuscript, the

[32] Sacchi 2009: 34–5.

[33] Klebs 1899: 451–5, Spadaro 1989a: 181–3, 1989b: 195–201, Rizzo Nervo 1992: 126–38, 1998: 269–75, 2002: 158–62, Cupane 1995 in the notes on the translation, Kechagioglou 2004, Sacchi 2009: 33–6.

[34] Sacchi 2012.

[35] On the re-Christianization of the text the following scholars, among others, have written: Spadaro 1991: 245–7, Beaton 1996:140, Carbonell 2002 and Kechagioglou 2004.

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indefinite time in which the story is set is substituted with that of the ascension of Christ and the preaching of the apostles:

> αφού ανελήφτη ο Χριστός εις ουρανούς εν δόξῃ,
> οι άγιοι απόστολοι εδίδαξαν τον κόσμον
>
> after Christ ascended to heaven in glory,
> and the holy Apostles taught the world.[36]

The Christian nature of time is highlighted by the fact that immediately afterwards an addition points out how Antiochos has been wrongly identified as a Christian (. . . ψευδώνουμός τε άναξ | χριστιανός . . . 1–2). To this precise temporal indication correspond three spatial references: one to Antioch, a well-defined city space; one to the sky into which Christ ascends; and one to the world, the global space of the apostles' mission. To the temporal indication, then, there corresponds a widening of the spaces in which the scenes take place. Whereas time identifies its beginnings with the ascension of Christ into the sky, space widens to include the entire ecumene. Shortly afterwards, the appearance of the devil that pushes Antiochos to love his daughter opens up other supernatural spaces, starting from the infernal ones:

> Αλλ' ο εχθρός και βάσκανος του γένους των ανθρώπων
> εις έρωταν σαντανικόν και οίστρον θηλυμανίας
> εξέκλινε τον κύρην της, <σ'> αγάπην εκείνην.
>
> But the enemy, the tempter the human race, drove her father to a diabolic passion, to the torment of an unhealthy libido, driving him to love her.[37]

Space also dilates further on. Apollonios sits at Archistrates's table and is invited to play the lyre and sing. His playing and his singing are so sweet that his listeners feel they are in paradise. In the Italian text:

> sì cominciò a sonare e a cantare, e sonava e cantava sì dolcemente che quegli ch'erano a tavola pareva loro essere in paradiso, sì dilettava loro il sonare e cantare d'Apollonio.
>
> he played and he sang so sweetly that those who were at the table felt themselves to be in paradise, so much the playing and the singing of Apollonios delighted them.[38]

In the Greek text, Apollonios is seen as an angel come from on high to sing of the terrestrial paradise created in Eden:

[36] *Apollonios of Tyre* (Kechagioglou). The translations from Greek and Italian are mine.
[37] *Apollonios of Tyre* 12–14 (Kechagioglou). [38] *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri* 16, 6: 134 (Sacchi).

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> και, όσοι τὸν εκούσασιν την υμνωδίαν τήν είχεν,
> την τέχνην και τα λέγματα και την γλυκύτητά του,
> έλεγαν να ᾽ναι άγγελος από ουρανοὺς απάνω
> και παίζει τον παράδεισον τον εν Εδέμ πλασθείσα.

and all those who listened to the melody, the technique, the words and the suaveness, said that he was an angel come from on high and that he sang of the terrestrial paradise created in Eden.[39]

Once again space widens to include the Christian supernatural: the sky, into which Christ has ascended and from which the angel comes; and all the terrestrial world depicted here in Eden.

The world beyond the terrestrial returns in the words of Tarsia, who is about to be killed on the orders of the woman to whom she was entrusted, when she asks her killer to be able to pray for her soul. In the Italian text the young woman says: 'Io ti priego che tu mi dia tanto di spazio ch'io possa pregare Iddio pell'anima mia' ('I beg you give me enough space so that I can pray to God for my soul'),[40] while in the Greek text she begs her killer:

> Λοιπόν ζητεί παρακαλεί έωσως ως μίαν ώραν,
> να δεηθεί και τον Χριστόν, και την Κυράν του κόσμου,
> να πέψει άγγελον καλόν να πάρει την ψυχήν της

> to concede an hour of time to be able to pray Christ and the Lady of the world to send a good angel to take her soul.[41]

Also in the story of the sale of Tarsia in Mitylene, the discrepancies with the western version hint at the religious sphere. In the Italian text the auction at which the pimp and the prince of the place, future husband of Tarsia, compete for the young woman and in which the pimp will win, is described in lively terms. He will take Tarsia to his house:

> ov'era uno membro fatto a similitudine d'uomo, e questo membro era d'oro e di pietre preziose. E quando fune dentro disse a Tarsia ch'ella adorasse a quello iddio; e quella disse: «Io non sono usa d'adorare cotale Dio» ed egli le disse: «E vi ti conviene adusare».

> where there is a member made to look like a man. This member was of gold and precious stones and he asks her to worship that god. Tarsia refuses, saying 'I am not used to worshipping such a god' and he says to her: 'It is in your interests to get used to it'.[42]

[39] *Apollonios of Tyre* 227–30 (Kechagioglou).
[40] *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri* 3, 16: 152 (Sacchi).
[41] *Apollonios of Tyre* 513–15 (Kechagioglou).
[42] *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri* 33, 9: 154 (Sacchi).

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In the Greek text the entire scene of the auction sale is missing – apart from the price offered for the girl – and all that is said is that she was bought by

> Μαρκιώνης την εγόρασεν, σκύλος μαγαρισμένος,
> είχεν και 'δούλον έμορφον, με λίθους τιμημένους
>
> that son of a bitch of Marcion, the one who possessed an idol, beautiful and decorated with precious stones.[43]

who, having taken her home, exhorts the woman Προσκύνησέ τον! ('Worship it!') and to whom Tarsia replies Χριστιανή υπάρχω ('I am Christian!').[44]

Faced with the elimination of the city space reserved for the auction sale of virgins, therefore a well-defined and delimited space, we witness in the Greek version an opening of the text to the wide literary–hagiographic space where Tarsia is located. Her reply is that of the Christian martyrs we find in the passions, in which the scene of the trial before a Roman tribunal occupies the central part. Indeed, we cannot but point out that the motif of the virgin condemned to the brothel, here used for Tarsia, is indeed of the passions of the Christian martyrs. This is a motif with a classical history that was already present in Herodotus and is found again in the novel, from which it transits into hagiography in texts such as the *Historia Lausiaca* or the passions of virgins such as Agnese and Lucia.[45] Independently of the different function that it, as with all of the narrative motifs, occupies in the different texts – here it is to be read as an ordeal both for Apollonios who is called to overcome the danger of incest, and for Tarsia who has to keep her virginity – we are here in the presence of the use, already present in the *Historia* and in all the versions that derive from it, of a motif that literarily re-evokes the hagiographic space and its temporal coordinates: the day of the martyrdom is the *dies natalis* of the saint, a precise chronological reference. The presence of this motif, which has now become a hagiographic topos, is in this Greek version emphasized so as to appear as a minor chronotope that vindicates its space within the chronotopic system of the text.

And again, when Antinagoras, Prince of Mitylene goes down into the bilges of the ship on Easter Day to try to free Apollonios, the Greek text says:

[43] *Apollonios of Tyre* 549–50 (Kechagioglou). [44] *Apollonios of Tyre* 551–2 (Kechagioglou).
[45] On motif in *Apollonios* see Rizzo Nervo 1995 and Panayotakis 2002.

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Χαίροις, κύρη Ἀπολλώνιε, και πάλιν λέγω χαίροις!
Οὐκ ενι θλίψις σήμερον, ἀλλά χαρά μεγάλη,
παγκόσμιος ανάστασις Χριστού του ζωοδότου,
και των πιστών ομήγυρις, ανάστασις των πάντων:
λοιπόν ανάστα, έξελθε, Θεῷ μη παροργίζεις!
Αυτός γάρ μέλλει και νεκρούς και ζωντανούς να κρίνει,
ἐν τῃ Δευτέρᾳ τῃ φρικτῄ οι καθαροί αλλήλως
νὰ ίδοσι και να χαρούν εις τας μονάς Κυρίου:
λοιπόν ανάστα, έξελθε, Θεῷ μὴ παροξύνεις!

Hail, lord Apollonios, again hail! Today is not a day of sorrow, but is one of great joy. Throughout the world today is the day of the Resurrection of Christ, the giver of life! It is a feast for all believers, resurrection for everyone! Arise therefore, come out, do not provoke the divine wrath! God indeed will judge the living and the dead. In the terrible second Parousia, the pure of heart will see one another again and together they will enjoy the lord's house. Arise therefore, go out, do not anger God![46]

Apollonios does not deign to reply and thus sends Antinagoras for Tarsia to console him.

In the Italian version, the reference to Easter is limited to the fact that Apollonios's ship moors in Mitylene on occasion of this festivity. The only one weak attempt by the lord of Mitylene to convince Apollonios is promptly rejected; hence there comes the decision to turn to Tarsia. Once again, in the Greek version space dilates to the ultra-terrestrial, to the dwellings of the pure on the final day. For its part, time assumes concrete form in specific moments: that of resurrection, bearer of life for all, and the final day of divine judgement.

Alongside this widening of space, we witness a narrowing of other spaces and other times. For example, both the time of culture and its space and the time of the school are cancelled. In the Italian text it is said that it is Apollonios's worry with regard to the education of his daughter that is manifested in the request he issues to his friends, in the moment he entrusts her to them. He does so in order to provide for her education when she is of the age both of the learning capacity of Tarsia and the wonder that the girl provokes because of her wisdom when she goes to school. Much space is then dedicated to the questions that Tarsia puts to Apollonios before the recognition that lead the man to be amazed at 'coanta iscienza' (such knowledge) demonstrated by the girl in asking them.[47] None of this is found in the Greek version, in which Apollonios leaves his daughter and makes no

[46] *Apollonios of Tyre* 658–66 (Kechagioglou). [47] Sacchi 2009: 147–8 and 166–7.

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mention of her education; here, also the part dedicated to the riddles in the recognition scene is drastically cut. In contrast, in the discourse that Tarsia initially directs to Apollonios, the sensible and wise words that the girl speaks to persuade him to come out of the bilges of the ship where he is enclosed are substituted by words of comfort – in which scriptural quotations are woven – that refer to the place and the moment of birth and of death:

> Ουκ έχει ο κόσμος διάφορος, ουδέ τα πλούτη κέρδος,
> όλοι γυμνοί εγεννήθημεν, γυμνοί πάλιν υπάμεν·
> χίλια έτη αν ζήσομεν, ως μία ώρα είναι
> που κείται και ψυχορραγεί και εβγαίνει η ψυχή του.
> Καὶ τις έγνω μυστήριον ή την βουλήν Κυρίου,
> το πόσα παύει ο θάνατος, πόσα κατασχολάζει,
> πόσες πικρίες, πόσες χολές και συμφορές του βίου;

The world has nothing that bears fruit and riches are of no benefit. Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return (Job 1:21). Even if we lived a thousand years, it is like just one hour (Ps. 89/90:4) while your soul will lie dying and you will take your last breath. There are those who know the secrets, those who know the will of the Lord, to how much bitterness, misery and calamity will death put an end?[48]

The same attitude is found also with regard to sovereignty. This, together with the family, constitutes a theme on which the *Historia* is centred,[49] as is, if in a lesser way, the Italian version.[50] The 'search for the realm' on Apollonios's part has much space in the romance versions, especially the French ones, where the extent of the chivalric exploits is dominant, especially in the Vienna version, where incest is demythicized and the sexual guilt turns into political guilt 'au regard de la monarchie féodale'.[51]

On the contrary, it is virtually non-existent in the Greek version, where only three verses refer to it in the end (853, 864–5). Here it is said that Apollonios, crowned king of Antioch, leaves and appoints his daughter and his son-in law as his representatives. Apollonios also relinquishes the kingdom of Tyros and, when his father-in law dies, he passes it to his son-in law, Antinagoras, despite the fact that he inherited it and, in so doing, he modifies what had been established concerning the succession

[48] *Apollonius of Tyre* 682–7 (Kechagioglou).

[49] In the *Historia*, Apollonius keeps for himself the kingdoms of Antioch, Cyrene and Tyre until his death. He entrusts his grandfather's kingdom to his son.

[50] In the Italian text, which modifies the Latin one, Tarsia and her husband will be sovereigns of Tirio and Antioccia and Apollonius on the death of Archistrato will divide his realm with his wife. Furthermore, the peace and the tranquillity brought by Apollonius for seventy years is underlined, together with the benevolent reign of his two sons after his death, see Sacchi 2009: 175 note at 51.6.

[51] See Zink 1982: 54.

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to the realm (if the Italian text from which the Greek *Apollonios of Tyre* derives mirrors the one which has come down to us).

To sum up, there remains in the Greek *Apollonios of Tyre* the narrative scheme of the ordeals that a family, divided by various obstacles, must overcome in order to reunite itself (therefore, the same scheme of the pseudo-Clementine *Recognitiones*). Time is the linear and horizontal form of the narration of events within biographical time in which the motif and the chronotope of the defence of virginity receives emphasis. The motif already present in the erotic Greek novel, is revisited here in a hagiographic key over which looms the shadow of incest. But a distinctive feature of *Apollonios of Tyre* is the meeting of horizontal time, closed and shortened, with vertical time, supratemporal and dilated, of the Christian vision of history and of stories, who live in it – here, the story of the family of Apollonios. This is another world, a space elsewhere that gives sense to 'this world' and to the spaces crossed by Apollonios and his family.

These spaces are broadly depicted and greater emphasis is given to what happens in Mitylene. In the story of the events that take place here, even the time of the narration is prolonged by the speeches – absent in the Italian version – in which Tarsia narrates her life, dwelling on the story of her stay in the brothel (ll. 695–756). Mitylene, not by chance, is the place of Tarsia's defence of her virginity. It is also the site of the recognition between Apollonios and the daughter who allows the ordeal par excellence that is faced by the protagonist, i.e. overcoming incest.

In seeking to find a definition of the chronotope of the Greek *Apollonios of Tyre*, I suggest 'the family in Christian time' – a linear, historical time into which the Christian supernatural erupts with its times and its spaces. Not by chance does the finale of the text read:

> Και ταύτα εξηγήθημεν διά τα μεγαλεία
> τα άπειρα, τά γίνονται καθεκάστην ημέραν,
> Κυρίου παντοκράτορος, και Ποιητού των πάντων,
> εις δόξαν και αίνον και χαρὰν Τριάς αδιαιρέτου.
> Νυν και αεί και εις τους αιώνας των αιώνων, αμήν.

All this we have told in order to show the countless wonders that every day occur through the work of our omnipotent Lord, creator and maker of all things for the glory, praise and enjoy of the indivisible Trinity. Is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.[52]

[52] *Apollonios of Tyre* 866–70 (Kechagioglou).

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Final Remarks

For Bakhtin:

> However forcefully the real and the represented worlds resist fusion, however immutable the presence of that categorical boundary line between them, they are nevertheless indissolubly tied up with each other and find themselves in continual mutual interaction . . . we get a mutual interaction between the world represented in the work and the world outside the work.[53]

If the depiction in the text of the real world presents the cipher of artistic creation – a discrepancy therefore with regard to a reality that is mechanically mirrored – it nevertheless, in a mediated way, provides lines that are more or less evident, often clues, traces that can be useful in harking back to other times and places in which the text was written.

From the brief references to the romance versions, it is evident that the cultural–historic contexts in which these works were produced influenced the process of the reception of the *Historia*, so much so, that what was a dominant chronotope in one version may be recessive in another. To wit: the hagiographic chronotope in the *Libro de Apolonio*; the epic–chivalrous in the medieval French versions (an innovation compared to the *Historia*); Fortune in the *Cantari*; the realm, but inscribed within the weave of Providence, in the *Patraña*. In the typological analysis of the novel, Bakhtin examines the problem of *portraying the individual*, i.e. the image of man that is constructed in each text.[54] According to the chronotopes identified in the *Apollonius*, there emerge a successive representation of a man who, from one text to another, affirms his personality in regaining sovereignty in the early Latin editions; is engaged in the glorification of the lineage in the medieval French texts; is concerned about the defence of all material possessions subject to fortune in the Italian *Cantari*; is the sovereign authority of both the collectivity and the rising social classes in the *Patraña*. All these images work as clues of how historical time is re-created in the text.

The search for the chronotope in the *Story of Long-Suffering Apollonios of Tyre* has unearthed a vision of the world that seems clearly to refer back to a sociocultural context where the presence of both the Christian supernatural and its values were strong. The Greek text represents different coexisting worlds, or rather spaces in which different times coexist. There, the

[53] Bakhtin 1981: 254. [54] *Ibidem*: 104 and *passim.*

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terrestrial world is turned into one where Christian space and time meet along a horizontal axis, onto which the vertical axis of an 'other' world is grafted, the world of the divine design to which man must conform his actions.

With reference to the Greek *Apollonios of Tyre*, up to now two places have been indicated as possible sites of production. Unlike Carolina Cupane, who suggests the French Peloponnese at the end of the XIV century,[55] Giorgos Kechagioglou thinks of Cyprus between 1350 and 1375.[56] The question cannot be dealt with comprehensively here and, at the moment, it must remain open due to the complexity of the elements that have come together to define it, and which have recently been considered by the latest editor of the text.

The chronotopical system of a text provides a precious help in the search for a faithful image of the social context and the image of the man represented not only for the interpretation, but also for the identification of its epoch and geographical area of composition.

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CHAPTER 7

Linguistic Contacts in the Late Byzantine Romances
Where Cultural Influence Meets Language Interference

Theodore Markopoulos

The rise of vernacular literature in many parts of Western Europe from the eleventh century onwards was paralleled in the late Byzantine Empire by the production of the well-known Palaiologan romances as well as the translation of various literary works from western originals in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. From a linguistic viewpoint, this was the first time since the period of the last papyri (eighth century) that a variety of Greek relatively close to the spoken one came to be utilized in written registers, a situation that arose because of 'diglossia', which had come to dominate the Greek-speaking world since the late Roman centuries:[1] from the late Hellenistic times onwards, the written variety of Greek – no matter the genre of the text – constituted an approximate continuation of the Hellenistic koine (or even the ancient Attic dialect in some cases), while the spoken varieties diverged continuously from this rigid norm throughout the centuries, as every living language is prone to do.

The systematic use of a vernacular variety in literary production (after the first tentative attempts in the twelfth century) can rightfully be seen as an important development in the history of Greek, not least because it made manifest in the historical record the diglossic situation that would otherwise have had to be surmised on the basis of the extraordinary – and actually implausible – stability of the Greek language as seen in the abundant surviving 'learned' writings. Nevertheless, the study of the vernacular late medieval Greek (LMG) has lagged considerably behind, at least from a modern linguistic perspective: there is still no comprehensive grammar of this period,[2] only scarce studies on late medieval Greek have been published,[3] while an annotated corpus of the vernacular texts is yet to be compiled.

[1] See Horrocks 2010 among many others.

[2] A fact that will hopefully be remedied by the publication of the long-awaited *Cambridge Grammar of Medieval and Early Modern Greek*, Holton et al. in press.

[3] See e.g. Mackridge 1995 and 1996, Pappas 2004, Markopoulos 2008, Manolessou 2008 and Soltic 2014.

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As expected, a similar picture emerges with regard to the linguistic examination of the romances themselves (both 'original' and translated). Apart from specialized studies which, by focusing on specific phenomena of LMG, have included those texts in their sources,[4] this field of enquiry is completely dominated by philological descriptions found in the editions of the romances,[5] with the exception of a comprehensive investigation into the language of *Kallimachos*.[6] Even though some of these descriptions are of considerable length and sophistication,[7] they leave much to be desired in terms of the linguistic tools and notions used, as well as in their analytical depth.

In all these investigations and the discussion in the relevant literature, a sole topic can be isolated as the most celebrated in relation to the linguistic variety of the romances: its alleged 'mixed' character. The notion of mixing refers to the inclusion in the texts of elements stemming from both the 'learned' and the vernacular Greek varieties, with obvious fluctuations as to the amount of material from each depending on the author of the text and other possibly related factors. This led to an intense debate on the origin of this feature that all romances seem to share, which is yet to be totally resolved.[8] Suffice it to say that, as Beaton rightly observes, the newly emerging written vernacular tradition was bound to incorporate elements from the well-known and well-established 'learned' tradition, especially since the latter constituted another variety – definitely different, but still – of the same language.[9] Yet, the exact properties of the mixing of the varieties as well as its possible sociolinguistic connotations remain understudied, as indeed do most linguistic issues associated with those texts.

This chapter attempts to shed light on a different linguistic issue that, although related to the important notion of cultural contacts and how they affected LMG romance production, has hitherto to a great extent escaped linguistic scrutiny: language contact. The view that the Palaiologan romances have to be considered in association with the equivalent western

[4] See Markopoulos 2008 and 2015.

[5] See e.g. Kriaras 1955 (ed. of Palaiologan romances), Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996 (ed. of the *War of Troy*), Agapitos 2006 (ed. of *Livistros and Rhodamne* **α**).

[6] Apostolopoulos 1984.

[7] See Lendari 2007 (ed. of *Livistros and Rhodamne* **V**).

[8] See Beaton 1996. Although the issue lies beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to note the reactions that the notion of 'mixing' created in the study of the Greek language diachronically from an ideological perspective (see Markopoulos 2014). As far as the romances are concerned, this was obviously very much related to the assumed 'sharp' divide between the vernacular variety as the variety of the people (and predecessor of modern Greek 'dimotiki') and the 'learned' variety as the variety of the establishment.

[9] Beaton 1996: 181–4.

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tradition is widely endorsed, and for very good reasons: two of the original romances (namely *Florios* and *Imperios*) constitute translations/adaptations of known western romances, some further works are direct translations from western originals (e.g. the *War of Troy*), while the almost contemporary flourishing of the genre of medieval romance in both East and West is a possible manifestation of cultural ties and potential exchange.[10] The same consensus has not been reached in relation to the *linguistic* ties between the western and Byzantine romances, as expected given the overall paucity of relevant linguistic studies.

The issue of language contact between the Greek- and the Romance-speaking late medieval worlds has attracted the interest of scholars mainly in relation to lexical borrowings and instances of contact phenomena occurring in specific texts. The sociolinguistic environment in many Greek-speaking communities (such as Crete, the Peloponnese, Cyprus and Constantinople itself, to name but a few) clearly favoured Greek-Romance bilingualism that might have extended from everyday communicative needs to a real cultural osmosis.[11] Obviously, influence on the literary sphere, such as the one assumed in the case of the romances, presupposes or at least is strongly indicative of the existence of bilingualism and, therefore, of possible influence on the linguistic sphere as well. While the assumption that cultural borders are also linguistic borders is more often true than not, it is unclear whether cultural exchanges entail linguistic interference, and if so on what level and to what extent.

In particular, literary exchanges in the written medium, such as adaptations/translations or simply 'imitation' of literary techniques and formulas, might have facilitated linguistic interference, i.e. transfer of lexical or grammatical material ('borrowing' of words / phrases), which nevertheless is always mediated by linguistic attitudes towards language contact: it is commonly assumed that translated works, themselves witnesses of cultural links, also contain instances of linguistic interference, but this actual depends on the level of bilingualism of the translator, his or her willingness to allow transfer from one linguistic code into another, and/or his or her inability to clearly differentiate structural elements of the two languages. This is particularly relevant in instances of so-called 'structural borrowing' (also called 'grammatical interference):'[12] in this type of linguistic borrowing, the meaning/function of a construction is borrowed, while the linguistic expression itself is translated in the target language.

[10] See e.g. Beaton 1996: 181–4. [11] For a recent overview, see Markopoulos 2009.
[12] See Thomason 2001.

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An example of structural borrowing could be the emergence of the future-referring 'ἔχω + Infinitive' construction, possibly on the basis of the exact Latin equivalent 'habeo + infinitive', although the relationship – if any – between the two constructions is disputed.[13] Although such phenomena of linguistic interference can be quite common in translations, it is in fact quite difficult to prove their occurrence beyond any reasonable doubt, given that no borrowed form is involved.

Based on these premises, this chapter aims to look into the issue of language contact as exhibited in the late Byzantine romances. Given the fact that lexical borrowings are readily identified and referred to in the majority of the critical editions of the texts, I focus my examination on potential instances of structural borrowing which, combined with the picture of lexical borrowings presented in the literature, might shed new light on the overall linguistic interference. To be more precise, this chapter attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What type of language contact phenomena can be found in the late Byzantine romances, especially on the structural level?
2. To what extent does linguistic interference follow cultural influence (in both translated and presumably non-translated romances)? Does the fact of translation guarantee high levels of both lexical and structural borrowing, or of either of them? And how is this related to other factors, such as linguistic register/genre?
3. Which medieval Greek variety is represented in those literary works? In other words, is the language of the (either translated or non-translated) romances representative of LMG in general?

Corpus and Methodology

The corpus of the investigation consists of six well-known late Byzantine romances: the five romances traditionally labelled as 'chivalric' or 'love romances', namely *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe, Livistros and Rhodamne*,[14] *Velthandros and Chrysantza, Imperios* and *Margarona* and *Florios and Platziaflora*, as well as the extremely interesting and intriguing *War of Troy*. While the former three are considered original Byzantine tales, the latter three constitute translations/adaptations of western originals. The details regarding the date of production, the manuscript tradition

[13] See e.g. Markopoulos 2008.

[14] Two published versions of the text have been included in the corpus: Agapitos 2006 (ed. of *Livistros and Rhodamne* **α**) and Lendari 2007 (ed. of *Livistros and Rhodamne* **V**).

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and the interrelationships of these romances are highly debated and, consequently, lie beyond the scope of the chapter.[15] The basic facts are as follows: all texts were most probably written between the late thirteenth and the early fifteenth centuries, although the exact dating is far from secure. They were all written in the same fifteen-syllable verse and are of varying length.[16] Importantly, they all survive in manuscripts of a considerably later date (mostly from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries), which adds scribal practices as another possible factor of linguistic interference. Although the significance of scribes cannot be overestimated,[17] it is nevertheless true that a proper linguistic investigation taking into account the manuscript tradition is nearly impossible without an annotated manuscript corpus, a clear *desideratum* for medieval Greek studies. Therefore, this chapter will only touch upon these issues whenever it is crucial for the analysis adopted here (depending also on the information available in the critical editions of the texts).

The corpus is compiled in such a manner as to facilitate the examination of potential language contact phenomena: more precisely, it includes three original and three translated romances, allowing for comparative examination of specific linguistic structures in the two groups of texts. Moreover, the strong literary ties among the five 'love romances' together with their differentiation between original and translated ones enables us to relate the impact of language contact on translated romances with their specific genre. In other words, it is possible to examine whether all translated romances behave homogenously in the case of specific linguistic constructions possibly associated with language contact, or whether it is the overall structure and literary features of each work that mostly dictate its linguistic form. With this aim in mind, the examination of the *War of Troy* will feature prominently in the chapter: as a translated romance which does not fall into the same group of the 'love romance' as the two other translated romances (i.e. *Imperios* and *Florios*), it constitutes an ideal 'control study' to determine the interrelationship between language variety, language contact/translation and register/genre in LMG.

Three different constructions are examined: the use of the -onta indeclinable participial form, the periphrastic adjectival comparatives 'pleon + adjective' and the future/subjunctive construction 'na exo +

[15] For a relatively recent state of the art, see Agapitos 2004 and Beaton 1996.

[16] The exact values are the following: *Kallimachos* 2,607 verses, *Livistros* **α** 4,601 vv., *Livistros* **V** 4,013 vv., *Velthandros* 1,348 vv., *Imperios* 893 vv., *Florios* 1,843 vv. and *War of Troy* 14,401 vv.

[17] Recent linguistic studies suggest that we might consider medieval scribes as proper agents of language change, at least in some cases (see Wagner, Outhwaite and Beinhoff 2013).

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infinitive'. The occurrence and the development of all three constructions in LMG have been regarded as related – to a greater or lesser extent – to language contact between Greek and Romance speakers, and consequently, constitute favourable cases for investigation into structural borrowing in the late Byzantine romances. In the case of the *War of Troy*, I have systematically consulted the original Old French romance in order to establish the 'authenticity' of the Greek text,[18] as well as possible instances of transfer and translation effects in general. Important in this respect is a relatively recent contribution by Taylor,[19] who distinguishes two types of translation effect – one direct and one indirect – in the syntactic domain of Old English. Following her account, similar arguments will be made in relation to language contact influence in the Byzantine romances.

The examination of the three constructions will be both quantitative and qualitative and will also take into account various relevant sociolinguistic facts (author, genre, place of origin, etc.) that might contribute to a better understanding of the relative distribution of the linguistic forms.

Language Contact in the Vernacular Byzantine Romances: Linguistic Data

The -onta Participle

The establishment of an indeclinable, gerundival -onta participial form constitutes an important morphosyntactic development in LMG. The ancient Greek fully-fledged participial system which marked the categories of voice, grammatical gender, case, number and tense/aspect had started to break down as early as Hellenistic times. This led to a gradual decline in the use of the participial forms, which eventually dropped out of use altogether, with the sole exception of the medieval indeclinable -onta gerundival, which was formed by the present stem.[20] This form acquired a final -s possibly in the fifteenth century, perhaps as an adverbial marker, and has become quite common since then.[21]

[18] In the sense of Joseph 2000. [19] Taylor 2008.

[20] For the very few -onta participles built on the aorist stem, see pp. 155–156 below.

[21] For a recent overview, see Manolessou 2005. Obviously, the changes described did not affect the Greek variety utilized in the learned registers, which continued to make use of the full ancient Greek participial system. It also needs to be noted that the medio-passive participial forms in –menos survived in LMG and in modern Greek probably because of their predominantly adjectival function.

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It has been convincingly argued[22] that the gerundival -onta form constitutes an 'internal' development in Greek, i.e. it has not been brought about through language contact, as its traces can increasingly be observed in the textual record as one moves from the Hellenistic to Roman and especially medieval times. Still, it is only in the vernacular LMG variety that the form became truly established, especially with regard to the semantic properties usually accompanying it in standard modern Greek, namely the circumstantial/adverbial meaning. Horrocks[23] argued that Romance influence is the main cause behind the establishment of the form, particularly as far as the solely adverbial function is concerned, given the equivalent (both semantically and phonologically) Romance forms in -ant(e). The similarity of the Greek -onta to the Romance -ant(e) constructions is indeed rather striking. Moreover, in the data provided by Manolessou,[24] the great majority of the attestations of the Greek construction are found in texts clearly related to western rule (i.e. the *Chronicle of Morea* written in the Frankish-ruled Peloponnese, the *Chronicle of Machairas* written in Frankish-ruled Cyprus and the *War of Troy*), which suggests a possible link between frequency of the participial form and a situation of language contact. After all, one of the most common language contact effects at the morphosyntactic level is not the emergence of a new construction in the target language, but the increased frequency of an already extant construction.[25] With all those considerations in mind, a closer look at the -onta form to determine possible contact influence on its development is warranted. Such an investigation is provided below.

The picture emerging from the examination of participial usage in the five 'love romances' and the *War of Troy* is rather mixed, which is perhaps to be expected given the idiosyncratic linguistic character of those texts. First of all, with the exception of *Livistros* (**α** and **V**), the -onta form is attested in all other romances in its circumstantial function (see examples (1)–(2)):

(1) Εἰσέρχεται *κρατώντα* τήν, τόν βασιλέα λέγει:
'He comes in holding her, and he says to the king:'

(*Florios* 731)

(2) *Τηρώντα* τήν ἀλλάσσετον ἡ χρόα τοῦ προσώπου
'When he looked / By looking at her all colour drained from his face'

(*War of Troy* 7731)

[22] Manolessou 2005. [23] Horrocks 2010: 298 [24] Manolessou 2005: 248
[25] The so-called 'strengthening', often related to bilingual first language acquisition, see e.g. Thomason 2001: 148.

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Table 7.1 *The occurrence of the participial -onta in the Byzantine romances*

Romance	Total no. of attestations	Frequency (1,000 vv.)
Kallimachos	1	0.38
Livistros-a	0	0.00
Livistros-b	0	0.00
Velthandros	8	5.93
Florios	2	1.09
Imperios	1	1.12
War of Troy	117	8.12

Imperios contains the sole attestation of the -onta participle used in a predicative construction reminiscent of a common ancient Greek participial function:

(3) Ὁ Ἰμπέριος ὡς φρόνιμος καί τάς Γραφάς *νοοῦντα*
'Imperios, as a wise man who knew the Scriptures'

(*Imperios* 484)

Although the qualitative examination of the construction does not differ significantly between the romances, this can hardly be said in relation to the quantitative data. As can be seen in Table 7.1, there is a striking discrepancy between the occurrences of the -onta participial form in the 'love romances' on the one hand and the *War of Troy* on the other, easily discerned in both the absolute number of attestations and the frequency of use (given as number of occurrences per 1,000 verses). The discrepancy is arguably far too great to be coincidental or to be attributed to manuscript tradition.[26] Two possible explanations immediately suggest themselves: either that this should be attributed to the translation practices utilized in the *War of Troy* or that this narrative should be considered as belonging to a different register and/or dialect than the other five romances.

Let us first consider the latter possibility. It is more than likely that various peculiarities in the LMG variety utilized in individual texts might be attributed to dialectal differences among their respective authors or of the scribes that copied the surviving manuscripts. Having said that, it is

[26] It is worth noting that the text of the published edition of the *War of Troy* does not correspond to any particular manuscript, being a critical edition of all seven of them (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996). Although this might distort the absolute numbers of relevant attestations, the difference in the frequency of use is of such magnitude that it cannot be mitigated by editorial practices.

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interesting to note that, according to Manolessou,[27] the gerundival -onta form was also quite popular in the *Chronicle of Machairas*, who was a well-known administrator in the court of the Lusignan in Cyprus. And although the precise location of the *War of Troy*'s production is not known,[28] Cyprus can hardly be considered as one of the possibilities because of the total lack of any features reminiscent of the Cypriot variety used in other contemporary texts of a secure Cypriot origin (as in the legal text of the Assises and in the *Chronicle of Machairas*).[29] Obviously, dialectal variation cannot be the sole answer, even if it did play a role, which remains unknown.

What about register variation? In what (sociolinguistic) way is the *War of Troy* clearly differentiated from the other five romances? With regard to its particular linguistic variety, it is quite difficult to tell, given the lack of sufficient linguistic studies on those texts. Even though all six romances clearly belong to the vernacular 'spectrum' of LMG, there are clear fluctuations as to the influence the 'learned' tradition exerted on each one of them. To give a tentative idea of the two ends of this continuum, *Kallimachos* is usually regarded as the more 'learned' of the vernacular romances,[30] *Velthandros* is clearly less so and *Florios* contains only a few 'learned' elements,[31] while the *War of Troy* is considered as rather marginally exposed to the 'learned' tradition, although it does contain a considerable number of archaisms.[32] No readily discernible correlation between register and frequency of use for the gerundive form is established: Four of the 'love romances' seem to pattern together in their scarcity of attestations of the -onta participle, although *Kallimachos* and *Florios* are found in the opposite ends of the continuum with regard to the incorporation of 'learned' features; *Velthandros* and especially the *War of Troy* exhibit a much higher frequency of use for this construction (see Table 7.1), although the former can be best described as sitting in the middle of the continuum and the latter on the more vernacular end.

Another way to explain the significantly higher frequency in the *War of Troy* is, as mentioned, to look for idiosyncratic properties that might account for such a discrepancy. The most obvious factor that can be immediately put forward is language contact. It is well known that this romance constitutes a translation of the *Roman de Troie*, a twelfth-century Old French romance by Benoît de St Maure that became famous in the

[27] Manolessou 2005. [28] But see Chapter 8 in this present volume for a plausible hypothesis.
[29] See Horrocks 2010: 362–6. [30] Beaton 1996: 118. [31] Beaton 1996: 138.
[32] Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996: lxxix.

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West. As in other translated romances, the LMG romance is actually an adaptation of the original, which was much longer (approximately 30,000 verses) and written in a very different meter. In order to determine possible French influence on the use of the participial form, a comparative investigation into both the LMG translation and the original was carried out. All instances of the -onta form were checked against the Old French text in an attempt to draw some conclusions on the basis of the presence or absence of equivalent constructions. Both patterns emerged: In some instances, the Greek participle translated the equivalent French one in -ant (see example (4a)), while in other cases its use is not matched by any similar construction in the original (see (4b)):[33]

(4a) i. Οὕτως γάρ *συντυχαίνοντα* τάς ρούγας ἀνηβαίναν
(*War of Troy* 5458)

ii. Ensi *parlant* ont chevauchié
(*Roman de Troie* 12917)

'Saying those words they set forth'

(4b) i. Ταῦτα λαλεῖς *ζηλεύοντα* . . .
(*War of Troy* 7406)

ii. E vos, quin avez tel envie . . .
(*Roman de Troie* 7406)

'You say these things because you're jealous . . .'

Crucially, although both patterns are attested, more often than not the Greek -onta participle does not equal any similar form in the French text. To be more precise, in only 25/117 instances (*c.* 21.3 per cent) is an equivalent participial form found in both texts. If we exclude from the total number of attestations of the participle seven cases of the participle built on the aorist stem,[34] then the total percentage of exact equivalence drops even further (19/110, 17.2 per cent). Obviously, the use of the -onta form does not follow directly from the use of the equivalent -ant French

[33] It goes without saying that the extremely rich manuscript tradition of the French romance poses significant problems for a linguistic investigation into the frequency of use of specific constructions, let alone comparative examination with one of its translations. For instance, it is almost impossible to check for manuscript variation in the original text, and is equally impossible to determine with any amount of certainty which manuscript version was actually translated into LMG. Although all such objections are readily acknowledged, it can nevertheless be argued that the sheer number of relevant attestations can overcome qualitative problems of this kind.

[34] See pp. 155–156 below.

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form. In other words, this is not a case of direct transfer, i.e. a case where a construction is transferred wholesale from the source language into the target language in the lack of any better equivalence or because of lack of skills from the translator. Although this might be a part of the explanation in some instances, it is clearly not a major part. This conclusion fits well with the fact that *Florios* and *Imperios* are also translated from western originals, but they do not comply with the picture of the *War of Troy* regarding the -onta form (see Table 7.1).

How are all these facts reconciled? A plausible scenario should take into account the interaction of translation effects, genre and manuscript tradition. The translation effect alluded to is indirect. Following Taylor,[35] I would suggest that a type of 'priming' can be observed in translated texts: as the translator faces various constructions in the source language/text, whenever he comes across an often repeated one he is more inclined to use an equivalent construction in the target language/text, independent of exact context equivalence. This is arguably a likely explanation for the facts in the *War of Troy*: the overall higher frequency of use of the participial -onta form is probably due to the established and frequent -ant construction in the original, but only indirectly, at least in most cases. This obviously presupposes that the -onta construction was already extant in LMG, which has been already independently argued for.[36]

What about the 'love romances'? In their case, one must consider the fact that they were interrelated in many ways, not the least being the linguistic code used.[37] Moreover, they were all – to a greater or lesser extent – dependent on the 'learned' tradition of the twelfth-century novels, where the -onta participial form had actually no foothold, being a subsequent linguistic development (at least with respect to its incorporation in the written registers). Apparently, in the literary tradition that gave birth to these late Byzantine vernacular romances there was no place for the gerundival construction, which had not yet acquired an established position in this linguistic variety but was occasionally strengthened by language contact with Romance.

The account presented leaves the data in *Velthandros* unaccounted for. Obviously, when one makes appeal to linguistic attitudes in the incorporation of linguistic elements in specific genres, then some amount of fluctuation is bound to occur. The author of *Velthandros*, although aware of the genre's linguistic conventions, might have had more intense contact with Romance speakers (and texts), or may have been more inclined to

[35] Taylor 2008. [36] Manolessou 2005. [37] See e.g. Beaton 1996: 154.

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utilize a relatively novel participial form. But perhaps the linguistic picture of this romance is compromised by the manuscript tradition: Beaton[38] argues that the sole manuscript containing *Velthandros* exhibits forms 'favoured in Crete and the Dodecanese', both of them areas where language contact with Romance speakers was quite intense. It is plausible, therefore, that the manuscript comprises constructions (perhaps such as the -onta gerundive) which were not present in the original romance, given that almost all manuscripts containing texts in the vernacular are potential new versions and not mere copies of the originals.[39]

The Aorist -onta Participles

The overwhelming majority of the -onta participial forms were built on the present stem of the verb. However, in some cases the aorist stem was used instead in order to construct a 'periphrastic' past tense (probably a pluperfect) with the copula 'be', as shown in (5):

(5) Ἀπεδά *ἦτον περάσοντα* τό ἥμισον τῆς ἡμέρας
'At that time noon had passed'

(*War of Troy* 8505)

In his investigation of the construction, Giannaris[40] argues that it probably constitutes a relic of previous periphrastic forms, a dying construction, hence its very limited distribution: it appears only in two texts, namely the *Chronicle of Morea* and the *War of Troy*.[41] Plausible as it may seem, this account ignores the important element shared by the two texts mentioned, which is language contact. The *Chronicle of Morea*, as is well known, was written under the auspices of the Frankish aristocracy in the Peloponnese, while the *War of Troy* is a direct translation of an Old French romance. Indeed, if one contrasts the LMG version with the French original, six of the seven instances of the construction have exact equivalents in the source (involving the past form of the verb 'be' + participle), as in (6), while the equivalence in the seventh instance is not improbable, but dubious.

(6) i. Ὁ Ἀχιλλεύς *ἦτον πέσοντα* . . .

(*War of Troy* 10052)

[38] Beaton 1996: 105. [39] Beaton 1996: 102. [40] Giannaris 2011.

[41] A third text from the fifteenth century, the *Chronicle of Tocco*, may also contain an instance of the construction, but the passage is marked corrupt by the editor. It is possible that the editor misinterpreted the construction, as it is relatively unknown (Giannaris 2011: 243).

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ii. Qu'Achillès *esteit trebuchiez*..

(*Roman de Troie* 22235)

'Achilles had fallen . . .'

Recall that, as far as the present-stem participial form is concerned, equivalence was only found in a small minority of instances (17.2 per cent). It is obvious that the aorist-stem form was almost exclusively dependent on a perceived Old French equivalent, not on the level of the form itself, but on the level of a past construction 'be + past participle'. As a consequence, it is more than likely that the occurrence of such a construction in the *War of Troy* is the result of direct influence/transfer from the French original, which explains the discrepancy in the patterns of equivalence between the present- and the aorist-stem participial forms. This 'periphrastic pluperfect', as Giannaris names it,[42] existed in environments favourable to contact between Greek and Romance speakers (witnessed by occurrences in texts such as the *Chronicle of Morea*), but never really became popular outside specific areas/groups, hence its limited appearance in other texts of LMG.

The Periphrastic Adjectival Comparatives

One of the LMG developments most commonly associated with language contact between Greek and Romance speakers is the analytic adjectival comparative involving the adverbial 'pleon' (= more) + adjective in the positive or comparative degree.[43] Contrary to the -onta participial, this construction probably constitutes an innovation in LMG whose distribution in the texts of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries fits quite well with a language contact scenario for its origin: all texts featuring this novel construction have a clear link with language contact. Therefore, in this case language contact is the possible instigator of the linguistic development, not a mere strengthening factor as in the -onta case.

Bearing that in mind, it is interesting to examine the occurrences (if any) of the periphrastic adjectival comparatives in the romances. This time, the data is more than clear: the sole example of the construction in the 'love romances' is found in *Velthandros* (7), while the *War of Troy* contains forty-two occurrences, exemplified in (8):

[42] Giannaris 2011.

[43] The discussion is based to a large extent on the data and analysis in Markopoulos 2015.

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(7) Τήν εἶχεν *πλέον ἔμπιστην* παρ'ὅλας τάς βαγίτσας
'whom she considered more trustworthy than any of her maidservants'
(*Velthandros* 882)

(8) . . . λέγω σας οἱ *πλέον καλοί* ἐξ αὔτους
'. . . I tell you, the best among them'
(*War of Troy* 8262)

Regarding the 'love romances', the picture is reminiscent of – but not identical to – the one concerning the gerundive form. The periphrastic comparative is completely absent from those texts, probably because of its recent emergence as well as the social bilingual environment which propagated it. The only exception is *Velthandros* which, as pointed out in the previous section, had a much higher frequency of use of the -onta participial form, closer to the pattern of the *War of Troy*. Obviously, one instance does not allow for any meaningful analysis, but strengthens even more the possibility of scribal interference alluded to in relation to the participial construction. And again, the fact that two of the 'love romances' are translations seems to have played a minor role in their linguistic choices compared to the genre and the literary ties with similar works.

The data in the *War of Troy* draws an altogether different picture. The number of attestations of the analytic adjectival comparatives surpasses the equivalent number from all other texts of the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries combined![44] This calls for an explanation along the lines of the aorist-stem -onta participle, i.e. an explanation based in all probability on language interference/transfer from the French original. A possible source construction is readily identifiable: the old French 'plus + adjective', which was well established by the fourteenth century (and probably much earlier)[45] and was structurally, semantically and phonologically similar. However, a comparative investigation into the two versions (Greek and French) showed a rather mixed situation, as both exact equivalence and absence of equivalent constructions are attested (see (9)–(10) respectively):

(9) i. Νῆσος ἡ *πλέον μακρύτερη* λέγεται Ἰποπόδης
(*War of Troy* 10580)

ii. Ipopodès, la *plus lointaine*
(*Roman de Troie* 23233)

'the more distant island is called Ipopodes'

[44] Markopoulos 2015: 214. [45] See e.g. Foulet 1930: 79–82.

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(10) i. Τινάς πλέον εὐμορφότερες οὐκ ἤξευρε εἰς τόν κόσμον
(*War of Troy* 13683)

ii. Que nus si beles ne saveit
(*Roman de Troie* 28706)

'Nobody knew women more beautiful in the whole world'

Crucially enough, both patterns have an equal number of attestations (twenty-one each). Recall that, in the case of the Present-stem -onta form, the pattern of equivalence amounted to *c.* 17 per cent of all cases and, consequently, the possible instances of transfer with regard to the analytic comparatives are much more numerous percentage-wise (amounting to 50 per cent). It can be argued that both direct and indirect influence are at work in the *War of Troy*: some instances of the construction are transferred directly from the original text, while the overall frequency (and the remaining attestations) is also due to the type of 'priming' argued for the participial -onta form.

The near-complete absence of the analytic comparatives from all other romances highlights the difference between an internal diachronic development and a recent, contact-induced one. On the basis of the data examined, it seems more than likely that the analytic comparative construction should be considered a case of structural borrowing: It was introduced into LMG through language contact with Romance speakers, and was apparently strengthened (at least in the written registers) by translations of western texts (in this case, romances). But not all translators knew or saw fit to use this construction, as the negative evidence in *Florios* and *Imperios* demonstrates. It depended, once again, on the social *milieu* of the translation: The translator of the *War of Troy,* possibly working at a distance (either in time or space or both) from the sociolinguistic environment of the 'love romances', and facing a very long poetic work, was much more vulnerable to influence – both direct and indirect – from the linguistic code of the original.

The 'exo' Subjunctive Construction

A final construction to be examined is one traditionally regarded as marginal in LMG and attributed to language contact. It involves the use of the 'auxiliary' 'exo' and an Infinitival complement, in a function similar to the morphological Subjunctive which follows the 'na' particle. Although the form was till recently thought of as a peculiarity of the *Chronicle of*

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Morea,[46] Markopoulos[47] has found that it also occurred in the *War of Troy*, as manifested in (11):

(11) Ὅταν ἀπ' αὖτον ἤθελε *νά ἔχη ἀποχωρήσει*
'When he wanted to / ought to move away from him'
(*War of Troy* 5785)

It is telling that this construction is completely absent from all other romances (and most other texts of LMG), similar to the aorist-stem -onta participles and the periphrastic adjectival comparatives. However, Markopoulos[48] argues that it belongs to a diachronic development probably originating in early medieval Greek and, consequently, its LMG instances can probably be considered the last remnants of a dying-out construction. With regard to the language contact factor, even though Old French grammars[49] do not contain any equivalent constructions, this cannot exclude the possibility of a minor construction that might have 'strengthened' – at least temporarily – the Greek one. What is more, the sheer number of attestations (65) of this 'periphrastic subjunctive' in the *War of Troy* is almost comparable to the occurrences of the -onta participle (117), which renders its absence outside the particular text all the more puzzling.

A comparative investigation into the original and the translated *War of Troy* rules out the possibility of either direct or indirect transfer, as no equivalent can be observed in the French text, where a variety of linguistic forms and expressions (e.g. infinitives, futures and subjunctives) are attested in the very same context where the 'na exo+ Infinitive' periphrasis occurs in the Greek text (see example (12)).

(12) i. Τούς θέλω κάμει, μάθε το, διά *νά μέ ἔχουν γνωρίσει*
(*War of Troy* 2624)

ii. Que jo lor ferai a saveir | quel cuer jo ai
(*Roman de Troie* 6370–1)

'I will make them learn [who I am]'

Therefore, it is quite possible that this construction is the result of 'internal' developments in Greek but, unlike the -onta participle, it is nowhere to be found in the 'love romances'. Since, despite appearances, language contact is probably excluded as a factor in this case, the absence of the 'exo subjunctive' from the other Palaiologan romances is due to

[46] Aerts 2005. [47] Markopoulos 2008. [48] Markopoulos 2008: 149–55.
[49] See e.g. Foulet 1930.

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sociolinguistic variation, either dialectic or diastratic. In other words, it can be argued that the translator of the *War of Troy* belonged to the same dialectic group as the author of the Chronicle of Morea, hence the concentration of the majority of the construction's occurrence in these two works; or that the construction belonged to extreme vernacular forms not readily appearing in the written registers, especially in texts such as the 'love romances' where the links with the 'learned' tradition ran very deep. Obviously, a combination of the two accounts is not unlikely, since linguistic forms common in specific dialectal areas are often known outside their geographical borders, but may be linguistically 'stigmatized' and hence deemed improper for certain registers.

Language Contact in the Vernacular Byzantine Romances: Analysis

The investigation into the three probable contact-induced constructions of LMG illuminates important aspects of the linguistic variety used in the Byzantine romances. Actually, it highlights the interaction among various factors that created the picture emerging out of the examination of the texts. In general, the five 'love romances' seem to behave more or less as a homogeneous group as far as their linguistic expression is concerned: they pattern alike regarding each and every one of the constructions examined, with the partial exception of the -onta gerundival, which is much more frequent in *Velthandros*, possibly as a result of its manuscript tradition. This corroborates the assumption usually made on the basis of their strong literary affinities[50] that they share a cultural background and a cultural and sociolinguistic environment that unites them in terms not only of literary but also of linguistic techniques and practices, despite individual peculiarities.

Their linguistic affinity is apparently a more decisive factor than language contact in determining various linguistic features. To be more precise, the translated romances (*Florios* and *Imperios*) do not exhibit any significant amount of transfer from the source language in the structural/morphosyntactic level, complying by and large with the linguistic conventions used in the original romances. As always, translation effects are multifactorial, a major factor being the translator himself and the cultural *milieu* he is working in: the adaptation of a western romance did not necessarily entail structural interference by itself, probably because of the

[50] See Beaton 1996 with references.

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high level of bilingualism of the translator, as well as the strong influence the other Byzantine romances exerted on the linguistic level.

As mentioned, the latter is obvious in many respects, but what about the former, i.e. the level of bilingualism? Unless we are led astray by the subsequent manuscript tradition, which might have distorted the linguistic expression of the initial rendering, the translation of those romances was not a mechanistic process, incorporating very few – if any – uncommon expressions that might have been due to transfer. Naturally, this does not exclude lexical interference, i.e. borrowed words. At the lexicological level it is rather easy to discern borrowings, even in relative abundance, although a systematic investigation into the issue is yet to appear. But words travel, and it is often difficult to tell what loanwords might signify in relation to the contact situation they are related.[51] For instance, the more 'learned' of the 'original' 'love romances' and presumably least affected by language contact,[52] *Kallimachos*, contains an attestation (1155) of the word κουρτέσα, a borrowing from either French 'corteis' or Italian 'cortese' (= lady of the court, noble lady)[53] which is otherwise attested predominantly in the translated romances, being particularly frequent in the *War of Troy*. This borrowing is indicative of some kind of language contact, but it is difficult to tell if it is significant in any meaningful way.

On the other hand, structural/grammatical interference is usually a much clearer indication of the level of bilingualism, since it involves more than one lexical element and is not readily borrowable, at least not in a way similar to words being copied to denote an invention, a new social need, etc. The translation of a long text constitutes an almost ideal setting for structural interference, because of the demands the great length places on the translator. Consequently, the absence of structural borrowing in the translated 'love romances' speaks evidently in favour of a high level of bilingualism for the translator, who not only managed to translate/adopt a literary work following largely the literary conventions of the equivalent Greek genre, but also did so without any apparent concessions to the linguistic variety used (apart from lexical borrowings, which have multiple functions and may be unavoidable in some cases). One needs only to think of a modern hypothetical scenario whereby a Greek bilingual translates an English text – let alone a literary text – flawlessly without any Anglicisms! It is fair to say that the lack of structural interference in the translated 'love romances' is actually a marker of their quality, of the high level of

[51] See e.g. Trask 1996: 17–24 for some interesting and entertaining examples.
[52] Beaton 1996: 219. [53] See Kriaras, s.v. κουρτέσα.

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bilingualism it required instead of an indication of marginal cultural and linguistic links between the original and the translation. In some cases, intense language contact might not show, especially if the bilingual author/speaker is able to avoid 'unconscious' interference, and to endorse it only as a conscious linguistic choice.

The *War of Troy* stands alone in this investigation, not because it constitutes a translated romance but, as already observed, because it did not constitute part of the same cultural environment that produced the 'love romances', if we are to judge from its linguistic features. Even though it largely shares the characteristics of the vernacular employed in most other contemporary romances, including the mixing of 'learned' and vernacular forms, it exhibits influence – both direct and indirect – by the original to an extent that surpasses without question anything observable in the 'love romances'. A sociolinguistic context of bilingualism (perhaps the Frankish-ruled Peloponnese), where French and Italian speakers, bilinguals in Greek, were present in some numbers, facilitated transfer from the original French *Roman de Troie* into its Greek version, since both the translator and the intended audience very likely employed the constructions that were transferred in their everyday communicative needs. How far from the cultural tradition of the Palaiologan romances could the translator of the *War of Troy* have been to translate 'Hercules' with Ερκούλιος instead of the well-known ancient Greek name Ηρακλής?[54]

Still, the romance with the stronger ties with the West, both culturally and linguistically, the *War of Troy*, might actually provide a more representative picture of the everyday language of its time than the 'love romances'. The latter were apparently written in a specific cultural environment (not necessarily in the same time and space), with specific genre practices that included particular linguistic choices and conventions. In this respect, they are more representative of the written literary vernacular than of the actual spoken linguistic reality. On the other hand, the *War of Troy* seems to be an authentic product of the language contact situation depicted both in linguistic and literary terms in the translated text, and, as such, much closer to the spoken registers of its time.

Conclusions

The Palaiologan 'love romances' formed the first late medieval literary tradition in the vernacular, utilizing a Greek variety that was only

[54] See Chapter 8 in the present volume.

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occasionally used in literary registers up to the thirteenth century. The tradition formed incorporated elements not only from the 'learned' literature (in terms both of literary conventions and linguistic expressions), but also from the equivalent western tradition that became increasingly known in the Greek-speaking world in late medieval times. The western influence varied among the five romances: In the literary sphere, it fluctuated from the translation of whole romances (as in *Florios*) on the one end to the simple borrowing of motifs and various other literary *topoi* on the other. In the linguistic sphere, however, it only encompassed the lexicological level (with varying degrees), while structural interference is hardly ever observed, not even in the translated romances which are by nature most prone to such linguistic transfer.

Although a systematic, comparative investigation into elements of language contact in the 'love romances' is still a *desideratum* for future research, the current investigation has arguably shown the coherent – rather negative – attitude towards 'foreign' linguistic influence from the authors of all romances, with the exception of specific loanwords. This can be explained, perhaps, as the other side of the coin concerning the linguistic mixing of those works: In other words, if the inclusion of 'learned' linguistic features is seen as an attempt to build a vernacular literary tradition on the basis of well-known and well-established linguistic norms, the exclusion of transferred constructions could possibly have been another linguistic strategy to achieve the same goal: acceptability.

No such considerations were probably relevant for the translator of the *War of Troy*. In different sociolinguistic conditions, quite possibly aware but not really part of the process to build a literary tradition in the vernacular, the translator saw fit to utilize constructions not yet fully established in LMG (e.g. the -onta participle) and even to improvise by transferring in the best (?) possible manner constructions from the French original (e.g. 'pleon + adjective' or the 'pluperfect' involving the aorist-stem -onta), which might or might not have been popular in the spoken registers of the bilingual community in which he lived or to which he referred. Different linguistic attitudes and strategies, but perhaps with the same goal in mind: acceptability, this time in a society where bilingualism must have been the everyday norm.

As is well known, linguistic and cultural borders tend to overlap. The late Byzantine romances constitute an interesting case for the interaction between cultural and linguistic exchanges at various levels. More systematic study into the romances might go a long way into determining the characteristics of this interaction in late medieval times, shedding new light on this period of intense cultural and linguistic contact.

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CHAPTER 8

From Herakles to Erkoulios, or the Place of the War of Troy *in the Late Byzantine Romance Movement*

Elizabeth Jeffreys

This chapter focuses on the long, anonymous Greek text in fifteen-syllable verse and a form of the vernacular that is usually referred to in modern scholarship as the *War of Troy* or *Ὁ Πόλεμος τῆς Τρωάδος*,[1] but whose original title is unknown.[2] The chapter will first present some basic information on the text, which is a translation of Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*; then discuss its date of composition, arguing that it was written between 1267 and 1281; and finally will give an example of the complexity of verbal links between the *War of Troy* and other Palaiologan verse romances that were arguably instigated by it.

Background

The chapter's title alludes to the transformational relationship that exists between the Greek *War of Troy* and Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*,[3] of which the *War of Troy* is a translation: many of the legendary Greek heroic figures from classical antiquity have been received into the medieval text in altered guise. Thus Herakles (Ἡρακλῆς) has become Erkoulios (Ἐρκούλιος), Hecuba (Ἑκάβη) becomes Κουβά, Jason (Ἰάσων) is now Ἰασοῦς and so on. However, some – like Agamemnon, Menelaos,

[1] Edited in Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996.

[2] The two manuscripts which preserve the text's opening lines offer widely differing versions of a title. In the edition the succinct version of **X** (Ἀρχὴ τῆς Τρωάδος) has been preferred to the ungrammatical and diffuse version of **A** Ἱστορικὴ ἐξήγησις πάντα καλῶς δηλοῦσα τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων στράτευμα [*sic*] καὶ τὰς ἀριστας (ex -ου) πράξεις παρὰ Τρωάδος ἔκπαλαι καλῶς πολεμηθεῖσας (ex -σα)· Διήγησις Δαρίου). As the scribe of **A** is given to recasting his material this version is suspect, though neither manuscript is satisfactory. For details of the manuscripts and their sigla, see n. 7 below.

[3] Constans 1904–12 remains the standard edition, despite its drawbacks, and was the one used in the preparation of Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996 (underway since 1969). Other editions are of selections only taken from single manuscripts: e.g. Reichenberger 1963 from Paris, BnF 2181 and Baumgartner 1998 from Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, D 55. Benoît's *Troie* is a monumental composition in over 30,000 octosyllabic rhyming couplets.

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Hektor or Odysseus have retained their traditional forms (e.g. Ἀγαμέμνων, Μενέλαος, Ἕκτωρ, Ὀδυσσεύς), while the many purely medieval names that Benoît had invented for Greek and Trojan warriors become even more creative in their Greek forms (e.g. Gilor d'Agluz / Γκίλιο δ'Ἀνγγλούς and Bruns le Gemeau / Μβροῦς τῆς Γκιμέας, two of Priam's bastard sons or Carrut de Pierrelee / Μακαριοῦν ντὲ Πιρελέ, a Greek soldier).

Benoît's version, written perhaps *c.* 1165, was produced in the literary environment of the Anglo-Norman court of Henry II Plantagenet (1133–89) and his queen Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122–1204): it was one of the so-called *romans d'antiquité* that, using material drawn from the epics of antiquity – those of Homer, Virgil and Statius – began to explore amatory relationships within a framework of military combat.[4] Benoît developed his narrative not from Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* but from the late antique prose narratives of Dares and Dictys which supplemented Homer's selective plots and which by the twelfth century had come, in their Latin forms, to be two of the main vehicles for the transmission of the 'matter of Troy' and its role in the legendary history, to the western Middle Ages.[5] One of Benoît's reasons for writing the *Roman de Troie* was to insert the Plantagenet dynasty into the legendary history of the ruling dynasties of medieval Europe.[6]

The Greek *War of Troy*, 14,401 lines long in its present form (the last sections are mutilated and there are also other internal lacunas), survives in seven manuscript witnesses,[7] none of which is complete. In common with the other Palaiologan romances preserved in more than one manuscript, those of the *War of Troy* all present significant variation in wording.[8] As always this poses considerable editorial problems,[9] a major reason for

[4] On the changing emphases in the *chansons de geste* which distinguished them from the *chansons d'antiquité*, see, e.g., Kay 1995, Levenson 1979 and Baswell 2000. On the role of *Roman de Troie* as a legitimizing tool for dynastic aspirations, see Desmond 2011.

[5] For a survey of the stages of this transmission, see Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996, xlii–liv.

[6] See, e.g., Thomas 2005 and Albu 2001.

[7] Seven witnesses of varying extent were used to construct the 1996 edition – **A**: Paris, BnF, Coislin 344, ff. 7r–191v (late fifteenth c.); **B**: Paris, BnF, gr. 2878 (sixteenth c.); **C**: Paris, BnF, gr. 1732a (late fifteenth c.); **E**: Paris, BnF, Coislin, ff. 1r–6v (late fifteenth c.); **R**: Athens, Coll. A. Brontis (Βρόντη-Τσιγκάνου) 2 (early sixteenth c.); **V**: Vienna, ÖNB, theol. gr. 244, ff. 260r–324r (early sixteenth c.); **X**: Bologna, Univ. gr. 3567 (late fifteenth c.); for a discussion of these see Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996, xciii–ciii. In the course of preparing this paper, it became clear that the apparent eighth witness (Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, ms Gabelentz 19; see Fuchs and Mackert 2012, 304 and n. 31) is in fact a larger section of the manuscript of which **R** is a small part. I am very grateful to Professor Kolovou, Dr Mackert, Dr Dietel and Dr Berger for their swift responses to my enquiries.

[8] An indicative example is provided by the poem's title quoted in n. 2 above.

[9] On issues and approaches relevant to late Byzantine vernacular texts in general, see Eideneier, Moennig and Toufezis 2001; on *The War of Troy* in particular, see Jeffreys 2001.

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the belated appearance of the text's first edition – which in turn accounts for the lack of extensive discussion heretofore of the *War of Troy* in relation to the Palaiologan romance movement.[10] However, the editors of the 1996 edition were in the fortunate position of being able to use Benoît's text to control many of the variants – for example, to judge whether lines or phrases present in one manuscript but not others were represented in the French.[11] This justified an unfashionable decision to define stemmatic relationships between the manuscripts and to use these, together with the witness of the French, to create the edited text. Though this choice has been criticized for its elements of eclecticism,[12] no alternative satisfactory solution has yet been suggested.[13] The multiple variants in the manuscripts of the *War of Troy* gave rise to a large textual apparatus. This apparatus is an integral part of the edition: apart from the information it provides about the connection between French original and its Greek translation, the details are an important witness to the text's linguistic usages, though perhaps more accurately to the usages of the manuscripts' scribes since the manuscripts range in date from the fourteenth to sixteenth century. The manuscripts of the *War of Troy* are used extensively in the forthcoming *Cambridge Grammar of Medieval and Early Modern Greek* since they form a large proportion of the evidence for late Byzantine Greek vernacular.[14] It is a pity that the most accessible version of the *War of Troy*, which is via the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG)[15] (where it is listed as Bellum Troianum), by the very nature of the TLG's principles lacks this vital apparatus: readers, as always, should be aware of the situation and proceed with caution.

The other formal characteristic that the *War of Troy* shares with Palaiologan romances is the high proportion of phrases that are repeated within the *War of Troy* itself and are also found in other romances.[16] The reasons

[10] Separate selections of around eight hundred lines were printed from Paris, BnF 2878 (= **B**) in Mavrophrydes 1866: 183–211 and Gidel 1866: 197–229 (with a descriptive study), but nothing more until the appearance of the *editio princeps* in 1996. It should be noted that the discussion of *The War of Troy* in Beaton 1996 was published before the complete text was available, and should be used with caution.

[11] Jeffreys 2001 and Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996: cxiii–cxxv, cxxvii–viii.

[12] Eideneier 1996.

[13] For example, there is no complete manuscript that could be used as a 'best text', the text is too long to print each version separately (although this should be feasible online), courtesy to readers demands correction of the manuscripts' idiosyncratic orthography: once all these factors are admitted, then a conventional critical edition is unavoidable.

[14] Holton, Horrocks, Janssen and others (forthcoming).

[15] The *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* can be found online at stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.

[16] Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996: lxxxi–lxxxvi.

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for this phenomenon were much debated in the 1970s and 1980s (were they a sign of a background in oral poetry or were they the result of textual interaction in a school of plagiaristic poets?)[17] with no generally agreed conclusion. Recently Jorie Soltic, benefiting from the concordance possibilities offered by the electronic copies on TLG (*pace* the warnings above) and using more subtle linguistic tools than in the earlier phase of debate, has re-examined the discussions over the reasons for the stylistic oddities of late Byzantine vernacular fifteen-syllable verse, with particular reference to the *War of Troy* and the *Chronicle of Morea*, and has concluded that the case for an oral background is solid.[18] The situation is ripe for wider consideration.

So much for background points not made elsewhere in this book.

Date

The date[19] for the production of the *War of Troy* that is proposed in the 1996 edition (which is also its *editio princeps*) is given as 'the fourteenth century', and elsewhere as 'ca. 1350'.[20] The only reason for this date was that linguistically and stylistically the *War of Troy* must belong in the period that saw the appearance of the vernacular verse texts we classify as the Palaiologan romances.[21] One important question to which an answer had not been found concerned the base text used by the translator. Why did this supposedly fourteenth-century translator use Benoît's original verse text from *c.* 1165? Fashions had evolved and the old-style octosyllabic texts from the twelfth century were being recast into prose.[22] These included Benoît's *Troie*, which eventually had five prose versions.[23]

Scholarly opinion has accepted that the Morea was a likely environment for the composition of the *War of Troy*.[24] The arguments on which this view is based include the mixed Moreot Franco-Greek culture fostered by the Villehardouin princes,[25] the large numbers of castles prominent in the

[17] The different approaches of Guiseppe Spadaro and Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys are summarized in Beaton 1996: 166–76; for a retrospective analysis of the debate, see Jeffreys and Jeffreys 2016.
[18] Soltic 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2015.
[19] The argument in the next paragraphs was initially floated in a conference held in Princeton in 2009 and subsequently published in Jeffreys 2013 (an expensive volume with limited circulation). It has been presented in other conferences and seminars and is slowly appearing in print, e.g. in the papers by Soltic cited in n. 18 above, and also Lentari 2014 and Jeffreys 2016. But because of the low-key circulation of this revised date, the argument is outlined here and the case thickened.
[20] 'the fourteenth century': Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996: lxxxix; *c.* 1350, Jeffreys 1993.
[21] As in Beck 1971: 115–54. [22] Spiegel 1995. [23] Jung 1996: 440–562.
[24] Jeffreys 1993. [25] Jacoby 1973, 1986.

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landscape with the courtly ethos thus entailed,[26] and the fact that another long verse text in a comparable style, the *Chronicle of Morea*,[27] which deals with post-1204 events up to the late fourteenth century, came from that area.

More recently it has become apparent that two other factors need to be taken into consideration. The first is that there was a hitherto virtually unnoticed reason to locate several of the other Palaiologan romances quite firmly in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, in Constantinople. This derives from the demonstration by Marie-Lyon Dolezal and Maria Mavroudi that phrases in a prose ekphrasis on the garden of St Anne composed by the *rhetor* Theodore Hyrtakenos found their best analogies in the verse romances, notably in the *Tale of Achilles*, *Velthandros and Chrysantza* and *Kallimachos and Chyrsorrhoe*.[28] Hyrtakenos's teaching career spanned the 1290s through to the 1320s. The other factor was a demonstration by the American art historian Ann Hedeman, and others, that in the 1260s and 1270s there was a revival of interest in the legendary genealogies of the Troy tales on the part of the Capetian court of Paris and its Angevin offshoots.[29] Within the cultural environment fostered by Louis IX (1214–70), manuscripts of Benoît's twelfth-century verse *Troie*, as well as the prose texts in the *Grandes Chroniques de France* which open with the Trojan War, were given nuanced illustrations to highlight these legendary connections.[30] Further relevant points can be found in Harvey Stahl's magisterial study of the Psalter of Louis IX which shows the use made of visual means to enhance claims to royal authority.[31] Suddenly the pieces of the puzzle about the creation of the *War of Troy* fall into place. The old-fashioned verse version of Benoît's *Troie* was given a new look in BnF, fonds français 1610, which is dated to 1264. The patrons involved were members of the court and family of Louis IX, including his hugely ambitious youngest brother Charles of Anjou (1227–85), who had been given charge of the Angevin realms in Naples and south Italy.[32] The illustrations (whose significance is not diminished by their small size and number) drew attention to the French rulers' links to a legendary

[26] Lock 1995: 75–80.
[27] Schmitt, ed., 1904 and Lurier, trans., 1964; see also van Arsdall and Moody, trans. 2015.
[28] Dolezal and Mavroudi 2002. [29] Hedeman 1991: 1–29, esp. 12–13 and Morrison 2011.
[30] Significant manuscripts are Paris, BnF, fr. 1610 (dated 1264) for the *Roman de Troie*, illustrated for the first time, and Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève, 82 (*c.* 1274) for the *Grandes Chroniques,* where the images arguably are in counterpoint to *Troie*; Hedeman 1991: 17–18.
[31] The Psalter (Paris, BnF, lat. 10525) can be said to display 'the fictions of history, duty and kingship created for a ruler who transformed the French monarchy': Stahl 2008: 2.
[32] Dunbabin 1998: 55–76.

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classical past. It became clear that the production of the *War of Troy* had to be tied in to the new treatment of Benoît's verse text and the ambitions of the Angevin administration of the Principality of Morea. Leonardo de Veroli was the significant person. He was a close personal friend of both William Villehardouin, Prince of Achaia, and of Charles of Anjou, who became his overlord.[33] Leonardo was cultivated and learned. He had married into the Franco-Greek de Toucy family (and thus was brother-in-law to William through William's first wife). He was William's chancellor of the Morea, and with the Treaty of Viterbo in 1267, which engineered the Angevin takeover of the Morea, he became the Angevin chancellor too.[34] This provides a context in which it would be appropriate to place the commissioning of a major text that had to do with the legendary background of both the new overlords and their new subjects.[35] Thus, by this argument, the *War of Troy* would have been written between 1267, and the Treaty of Viterbo, and 1281, and the death of Leonardo. As a corollary, the *War of Troy* is the earliest of the Palaiologan romances, and not one of the last.[36]

Cultural Context

More can be said to demonstrate that the third quarter of the thirteenth century is the most likely context for the production of the *War of Troy*.

There is sufficient documentary and narrative evidence to have enabled several generations of scholars to draw a reasonably consistent picture of conditions in the thirteenth-century Morea.[37] For the first fifty years of its existence following the Champlitte and Villehardouin takeover in the aftermath of the Fall of Constantinople in 1204 by and large the Morea was materially prosperous. A settlement was reached quite quickly with the Greek *archontes* that imposed Frankish overlordship but allowed daily life – both agricultural and commercial – to proceed harmoniously. Sturdy castles that dominated the landscape were constructed, both marking the conquest and indicating a prosperous economy.[38] Churches were built

[33] Dunbabin 1998: 91–4. [34] Longnon 1949: 234–7; Lock 1995: 185–9.

[35] On the relevance the Trojan legends to the crusading conquerors of Greek lands in the aftermath of the capture of Constantinople in 1204, see Shawcross 2003.

[36] There are no firm dates for the chronology of the romances, which is why the observations made in Dolesal and Mavroudi 2002 are significant. *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* is plausibly associated with Andronikos Palaiologos, nephew of Michael VIII, d. after 1310; Agapitos has argued, largely on the basis of a shield-raising episode which he associates with the coronation of Theodore II Laskaris in 1254, that *Livistros and Rhodamne* is the earliest and was written in Nicaea: Agapitos 2006: 50–2.

[37] e.g. Jacoby 1967 and Jacoby 2013. [38] Bon 1967; Andrews 2006.

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for the Catholic invaders (at Blachernai or Isova, for example), embellished with architectural elements in the Frankish styles from invading overlords' home territories – and probably also with painted scenes on their interior walls.[39] At the same time the Orthodox community retained its ecclesiastical buildings, while new constructions picked up on Frankish motifs.[40] There is evidence that the Moreot coastal towns had for some time participated in trans-Mediterranean trade.[41] William Villehardouin was able to send a substantial contingent of well-equipped knights to Louis IX's crusade to Egypt.[42] All this speaks to a materially comfortable environment.

Intangible cultural matters are less easy to evaluate. The Moreot Frankish elite remained in contact with their counterparts in Champagne and Burgundy, and with the royal court in Paris. There the ethos of the elite involved participation in – or sponsorship of – literary activity, as well as the support of prestige buildings. Probably the outstanding prestige building by the mid-century in Paris that involved the French court was the Sainte Chapelle built by Louis IX to house the relics of the Passion which had been acquired from Constantinople after 1204.[43] There was nothing to match that in the Morea. The knights on horseback that later appeared on the walls of Orthodox churches in Mani can be taken as emblematic of the Franco-Greek symbiotic lifestyle,[44] but the Morea never fostered magnificent Gothic structures such as those created in Cyprus (for example, the Selimye mosque, the former Hagia Sophia cathedral, begun *c.* 1210).[45] The Moreot princely foundations, such as Chlemoutsi, were solid but less flamboyant.[46]

Literary activity is a more complicated issue. In a sign of the symbiotic life which it seems justifiable to claim for the Morea, a few Greek manuscripts survive that were copied there during the latter years of the thirteenth century; these were liturgical or theological and can be seen as part of the activities of the bibliophile Nikephoros Moschopoulos which saw the revitalization of the ecclesiastical structures of the Greek Orthodox bishopric based at Mistra.[47] The peak of such efforts came in the late fourteenth century under the Byzantine Despotate when the balance of power in the Peloponnese had altered completely; this copying phase

[39] Bouras 2001; Gerstel 2013b. [40] Papalexandrou 2013. [41] Armstrong 2009.
[42] Haines 2013: 57–8, 77–9. [43] Leniaud and Perrot 2007: 82–91. [44] Gerstel 2013a.
[45] Papacostas 2005. [46] Athanasoulis 2013.
[47] Zakythenos 1975: vol. II, 316–19. On Moschopoulos's own collection of manuscripts, acquired over his lifetime, see Nelson 1986: 248–52.

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included a number of ancient Greek authors.[48] For French, there has yet to be found an example of an extant manuscript in French that was certainly made in the Morea before the fifteenth century. Although one of the prose versions of Benoît's *Troie* shows knowledge of the topography of the Morea, it is not inevitable that the author did his work on the spot in the East rather than after returning from his travels.[49] The manuscript of the verse *Troie* that includes a copy of a document relating to the division of Venetian territory after 1204 is written by an Anglo-Norman scribe who, to judge by the manuscript's ornamentation, worked in Venice.[50] We are on much firmer ground with two texts in French which certainly circulated in the Morea and would have had copies made there: the *Assizes de Romanie*,[51] the law book for the Frankish Morea, and the French version of the *Chronicle of the Morea*,[52] the history of the early years of post-1204 Morea. Both began to come into existence in the first decade of the fourteenth century. The *Chronicle of Morea* has a complicated composition process on which agreement has still not been reached: Teresa Shawcross talks of periods of rolling composition from the late thirteenth century onwards.[53] The only extant manuscript of the French version of the *Chronicle of Morea* is from the late fourteenth century containing a text created between 1341 and 1346, perhaps in Naples.[54]

However, it is helpful to consider the work done by David Jacoby on the literary culture in other crusading areas. He has teased out significant evidence for awareness in Cyprus and Crusading Acre of contemporary French writings, the presence of poets among the leaders of the crusading forces and the use of latest fashions in Arthurian material at jousts and feasts.[55] The Morea stands up well in this context, with the *Chronicle*

[48] e.g. Herodotos (Paris, BnF, gr. 1634, copied in 1372 by Constantine priest and chartophylax in Astros in Morea), Josephus (Oxford, Barocci 151, *c.* 1370) and Xenophon (Milan, Ambrosiana A 74; copied in 1374); the Josephus and Xenophon manuscripts were also copied in Astros, but not by Constantine. See Turyn 1972, vol. I, 239. The most prolific copyist in this period was Manuel Tzykandyles (see the online database 'Pinakes: texts et manuscrits grecs' at pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr), between 1362 and 1372 seemingly in the service of the ex-emperor John Kantakuzenos in Morea. On the copying phases *c.* 1300 and then *c.* 1370 see Etzeoglou 2005. See also Chapter 10 in the present volume.

[49] Constans and Faral 1922; Jung 1996: 440–3.

[50] Jung 1996: 114, on ms Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, D 55 sup.; cf. Jacoby 1984: 634–5.

[51] *Assises de Romanie*: Topping 1949 and Jacoby 1971.

[52] *Chronicle of Morea*: Longnon, ed., 1911; van Arsdall and Moody, trans., 2015.

[53] Shawcross 2009: 116–84.

[54] Shawcross 2009: 264–5; for arguments that this manuscript was, on the contrary, copied in Greece, see Blanchet and Saint-Guillain 2013.

[55] Jacoby 1984 and Jacoby 1986.

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of Morea and the *Assises de Romanie*, and the two songs attributed to William Villehardouin that were included in the mid-twelfth century French songbook known as the *Chansonnier du Roi*, the King's Songbook, discussed below. But Jacoby was unaware of the existence of *The War of Troy*. What can be taken, however, from his studies is that cultural activities involving literary material were part of the elite way of life in French Outremer. This too is the argument more recently of Gill Page: the Morea would have been far from being excluded from the literary currents of the period.[56] So, when all this is put together, it can be argued that, quite apart from whatever political agendas may lie behind the initial French *Roman de Troie* and the subsequent Greek *War of Troy*, the Franco-Greek society of the Morea, by analogy with other contemporary crusading communities, would be in the loop, as it were, for new literary fashions and book production. Their elite would be culturally receptive to the concept of a piece of writing that spoke to their current circumstances.

There is indeed evidence that cultural activity in Outremer involved the production of manuscripts. Louis IX whose tastes, and the tastes of his court, had fostered the decorated manuscripts of the *Grandes Chroniques* and the *Roman de Troie* in Paris in the 1260s, was in the Holy Land from 1250 to 1254 in the aftermath of the disasters of the Seventh Crusade.[57] During this time, and subsequently, luxury illustrated manuscripts of texts in the Old French vernacular, as well as in Latin, were produced in Acre, arguably stimulated by the present of King Louis – most notable of these being the Arsenal Bible almost certainly made for his personal use.[58] The later manuscripts from Acre included secular texts, such as copies of William of Tyre's *Histoire d'Outremers*[59] and the anonymous *Histoire Universelle*.[60]

It is now relevant to consider an important recent study by John Haines on the *Chansonnier du Roi*, the King's Songbook mentioned above.[61] The *Chansonnier* is a *de luxe* manuscript, now housed in Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris as Paris, BnF, fr. 844.[62] It contains a collection of love songs, some with music, by some of the most renowned vernacular lyric poets of the period. Portrait vignettes, often embellished with gold leaf

[56] Page 2015. [57] Strayer 1969: 487–521, at 504–5.
[58] Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms 5211: Folda 2005: 282–95; see also Buchthal 1976.
[59] e.g. Paris, BnF, fr. 2628; Folda 2005: 639–42.
[60] e.g. Dijon, Bibliothèque municipale, 562; Folda 2005: 345–50. [61] Haines 2013.
[62] A digitized version of the manuscript can be found via the Gallica portal of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (gallica.bnf.fr), and the images are also available in colour via the same library's Mandragore portal (mandragore.bnf.fr).

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accompanied the verses, though many have been subsequently cut out. The identity of the poet at the head of the list has caused controversy. His name – or rather title – has been read variously as 'li prince de le Mourée' or 'li prince de l'amore', that is, the Prince of the Morea, or Prince of Love. Is this a fictional character, or is it a reference to William Villehardouin? The most detailed study of BnF, fr. 844 before Haines, by Jean and Louise Beck in 1938, suggested that the authors in the opening sections were presented in a feudally hierarchical order, opening with the King of Jerusalem; the enigmatic 'prince de le Mourée' was identified as Charles of Anjou.[63] The following year Longnon proposed William Villehardouin.[64] Part of the problem is that not only has the manuscript lost many images but the order of the gatherings was disturbed during a nineteenth-century rebinding. Haines, a musicologist, has re-examined the manuscript with one eye on its place in the historiography of the medieval written song and another on the historical circumstances revealed by the poets in the collection. In essence, Haines argues that the songbook was initially commissioned by Charles of Anjou in 1258 as a lavish gift to mark the third marriage of his good friend William Villehardouin to Anna Doukaina of Epiros.[65] However, the manuscript was never completed, and it may never have reached the Morea. Haines offers an almost completely convincing explanation of the curious sequence of song material in BnF, fr. 844, arguing that it reflects the song-writing strand in the aristocratic personnel of the crusading movement, presented hierarchically from the prince downwards.[66] The book was lavishly constructed with fascicles devoted to each author and illustrated with small, square vignettes depicting the aristocratic troubadours, usually on horseback and often in armour. It reflects the manner of illustrating secular manuscripts that was developing in the mid-thirteenth century and can be compared to the illustrations in the manuscripts for Benoît's verse *Troie* and the prose *Grandes Chroniques*, which were also small and square.[67] They could be viewed as historiated initials. The *Chansonnier* was not made in the Morea, though that was its destination. What can be taken from this discussion is that the leaders of Moreot society would have been comfortable with the idea that lavishly illustrated manuscripts could be commissioned to make a point that would be understood by their elite audience: such manuscripts could celebrate a princely marriage through the *Chansonnier*, or mark a change in political relations through the Greek *War of Troy*.

[63] Bek and Beck 1938. [64] Longnon 1939. [65] Haines 2013: 58.
[66] Haines 2013: 97–107. [67] As in the manuscripts referred to in no. 30 above.

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The *War of Troy* was intended to be illustrated, although the six images in BnF, gr. 2878 (ms **B** in the 1996 edition of the *War of Troy*, dating to the first quarter of the sixteenth century) are misleading.[68] There are spaces left in four of the seven surviving manuscripts of the *War of Troy*, all with captions, some with numbered captions.[69] These can only have been intended for illustrations, and arguably were part of the initial translation process. However, understanding how, why and when these appeared in the text has always been problematic because the thirteenth-century illustrated manuscripts of the French Trojan material contained few illustrations,[70] while the fuller series did not appear until the fourteenth century[71] and even then does not match the positioning and number of scenes that would appear to have been present in the *War of Troy*, where a case can be made that the original series included at least 120 images.[72] This discrepancy remains a problem. Most of the illustrations in the *War of Troy*, from their positioning and captions, would have depicted scenes of knights in combat. There seems to have been no interest in illustrating the episodes of amatory encounter for there are no spaces associated with those scenes. There is, however, a little interest in depicting fantastic objects, such as the Chamber of Beauty and Pharaoh's tent,[73] where blank spaces appear at these points in the Greek text. The fifty or so historiated initials in the *Chansonnier du Roi* depict either pairs of knights in combat or the poet-singer, sometimes with the lady to whom his song is addressed. Nevertheless, the result of Haines's study of the this manuscript is an enrichment of our understanding of the cultural life of the Franco-Greek Morea that provides a further impetus to locate the *War of Troy* in that region in the middle years of the thirteenth century.

Intertextual Phrases

The final section of this chapter considers an example of the verbal complexities in the interrelationships between the Palaiologan romances.

[68] Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996, plates 1–8.
[69] Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996: cv–cxii. Note that the recently refound Leipzig, ms Gabelentz 19 is a larger section from the already known fragment R, so manuscripts of *The War of Troy* remain seven.
[70] As in BnF, fr. 1610 (the only illustrated manuscript of Benoît's *Troie*) or in the adapted prose versions incorporated in the *Histoire Universelle*; Buchthal 1971: 9–13.
[71] Buchthal 1971: 14–20. [72] Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996: cvii–cviii.
[73] Chamber of Beauty: *The War of Troy* 6288 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys), *Roman de Troie* 14631 (Constans); Pharaoh's tent: *The War of Troy* 5941 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys), *Roman de Troie* 13819 (Constans). Cf. Jeffreys 2007.

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The question of the rationale behind the phrases that recur in several of the Palaiologan romances is a vexed one, as indicated earlier.[74] The case that is examined here suggests that in this instance the shared phraseology is not due to residual influence from a background of oral composition[75] but rather to the use by the *War of Troy* of specific phrases whose formulation was 'compelled' by the French text that was being translated. The use of these phrases in other romances, where the wording is not 'compelled' by a close relationship to a source text, indicates knowledge of the *War of Troy*, and thus its priority. However the patterns are far from straightforward.

While most of the *War of Troy* is concerned with rather repetitive battle scenes there are four love stories interwoven with the battlefield clashes: Jason and Medea, Paris and Helen, the Troilus-Briseis-Diomedes triangle, and Achilles and Polyxena.[76] There are some striking phrases to express the amatory relationship between the lovers, using vocabulary of servitude and enslavement. Thus Jason swears to Medea after she has admitted him to her chamber:

> Κυρά μου, ὁ καβαλλάρης σου καὶ δοῦλος ἐδικός σου,
> δοῦλος ἀλλ' ἀνεξάλειπτος τῆς ὅλης τῆς ζωῆς μου,
> παρακαλῶ σε τὰ πολλὰ νὰ μοῦ δεχθῇς τὸν ὅρκον,
> λίζιός σου νὰ γένωμαι ὅλου τοῦ ὁρισμοῦ σου.[77]

499 Κυρά BEVX : κερά A || δοῦλος ABEX : ὁ δοῦλος V || ἐδικός BEX : ὁ ἐδικός A ὁ δικός V || **500** δοῦλος ABEX : ὁ δοῦλος V || ἀλλ' ἀνεξάλειπτος BX : ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνεξάλειπτος V ἀνεξάλειπτος E καὶ ὑποχείριος A || τῆς ὅλης BX : ὅλης δὲ V ἡμέρας E εἰς ὅλην A || τῆς ζωῆς BEVX : τὴν ζωὴν A || **501** σὲ τὰ ABEX : om. V || μοῦ ABEX : μὲ V || **502** λιζιός ABEX : ἐδικός V || ὅλου X : ὅλος ABE δι' ὅλου V ||

In English translation:

> My lady, I am your knight and your own servant,
> indeed your unceasing servant throughout my life,
> I beseech you to accept my oath
> so that I become your liege man to do your bidding.[78]

[74] See nn. 16–18 above.

[75] Though that background is nonetheless visible in high proportion of repeated phrases that make up the style of *The War of Troy*; Jeffreys and Jeffreys 1979 and 2016.

[76] Jason and Medea: 270–724; Paris and Helen: 1744–5, 1883–961, 4879–901, 4994–8, 10442–92; Troilus-Briseis-Diomedes: 5670–897, 6444–527, 9049–133; Achilles and Polyxena: 7704–918, 8656–747, 9321–63, 9971–10135. For an insightful analysis into the Greek writer's presentation of these scenes through variations in the depiction of the lovers' gaze, see Lendari 2014; Constantinou 2017.

[77] *War of Troy* 499–502 (Papathomopoulou and Jeffreys).

[78] All translations are my own.

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This represents *Roman de Troie* 1602–8 (Constans):

> Dames, li vostre chevaliers,
> Icil qui quites senz parties
> Sera toz les jors de sa vue,
> Vos prie e requiert doucement
> Quel receiz si ligement,
> Qu'a nul jor mais chose ne face
> Qui vos griet ne que vos deplace

In English translation:

> Lady, this your knight
> who will support you entirely of his free will [quites senz parties]
> all the days of his life
> beseeches and requests gently
> that you receive him as your liege man
> who will never do anything
> to grieve or displease you.

The Greek version corresponds quite closely to the French original. 'Chevaliers' has become καβαλλάρης. The phrase 'quites senz parties' is difficult; it is fairly expressed in English as 'entirely of his free will' and, taken together with 'sera toz les jors de sa vue', is adequately represented in the Greek by ἀνεξάλειπτος τῆς ὅλης τῆς ζωῆς μου. Λίζιος is an acceptable translation of 'ligement', while the last two lines of the French – 'who will never do anything to grieve or displease you' – are bundled up as ὅλου τοῦ ὁρισμοῦ σου. This is the most paraphrased element in these lines. The import of both the French and the Greek is that Jason (or Iasous, as he has become for the translator) is entering into a bond of amatory servitude with Medea.

The words καβαλλάρης, δοῦλος, λίζιος and ὁρισμοῦ deserve comment. Καβαλλάρης is used here in a personal sense, with the knight in the personal service of the lady. In the TLG καβαλλάρης is listed sixty-one times in eleven authors, most frequently in the *War of Troy*, next most frequently in the sixteenth-century version of the *Alexander Romance* in Ashburnham 144,[79] then in the *Chronicle of the Morea*, followed closely by *Imperios and Margarona*,[80] *Florios and Platziaflora*,[81] and the Grottaferrata version of *Digenis Akritis*.[82] The shades of meaning are not easy to differentiate, but arguably the standard meaning in these texts is military with καβαλλἀρης referring to an upstanding young man in armour on

[79] Lolos and Konstantinopoulos. [80] Kriaras 1955. [81] Cupane 1995. [82] Jeffreys 1998.

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horseback. Certainly in the *War of Troy* of the ten examples to be found there,[83] the one in the scene with Jason is the only one with a non-military reference, and this has been suggested – can one say compelled? – by the French text that is being translated. 'Chevaliers', of course, in Benoît also has a complex semantic field, and to prioritize the non-military element is to skate over many issues.

Next λίζιος. The TLG throws up nine forms with ninety-six examples from twelve texts ranging in date from the twelfth century, where there are three cases in the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene, referring to relationships of obligation between crusaders and Byzantines. The highest usage comes in the *Chronicle of Morea*, with some thirty or so examples, all referring to the feudal hierarchy established in the years after the Frankish conquest. Λίζιος also occurs once each in the London version of the *Tale of Achilles*[84] and *Velthandros and Chrysantza*,[85] on both occasions in the feudal sense. The *War of Troy* has five examples, using three forms (λίζιος [502, 8655], λίζιοι [4012], λίζιους [8575]). All except the one in line 502 in the passage quoted above refer to the feudal hierarchical relationship: in line 502 of the *War of Troy* the use of λίζιος has been compelled by 'ligement' in Benoît. The use of λίζιος in *Livistros and Rhodamne* is interesting. There are four instances, of three forms of λίζιος, all occurring in recension **α** only,[86] and so the word has been removed from the reworked version in the Vatican manuscript, whether the reworking is by the scribe Manouel Melikis or a predecessor.[87] All are amatory rather than feudal: thus (to give two examples)

> Ἐγώ᾽μαι ὁ Πόθος, λέγει με καὶ εἶπα τον: Προσκυνῶ σε,
> τρέμω τὴν ἐξουσίαν σου, φρίττω τὴν δύναμίν σου,
> δουλώνομαι εἰς τὸν Ἔρωταν, λίζιός του νὰ ὑπογράψω.[88]
>
> 'I am Desire', he said to me and I replied, 'I reverence you,
> I tremble before your authority, I shudder at your might,
> I am in servitude to Eros, I enrol as his liege man.'

and

> νὰ ὀμόσω νὰ εἶμαι δοῦλος σου ὅλος τοῦ ὁρισμοῦ σου,
> λίζιος τοῦ θελήματος καὶ τοῦ προστάγματός σου.[89]
>
> I swear to be your servant to do your bidding,
> liegeman to your wish and command.

[83] *War of Troy* 499, 3103, 3126, 5428, 6503, 6964, 7513, 7558, 9429, 12490 (Jeffreys and Papathomopoulou).
[84] *Tale of Achilles* 88 (Hesseling).
[85] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 789 (Cupane).
[86] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 375, 589, 517, 4167 (Agapitos).
[87] Lentari 2007.
[88] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 375 (Agapitos).
[89] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 517 (Agapitos).

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Note that in these examples λίζιος is part of a lexical bundle that includes δοῦλος and δουλώνμαι, and ὁρισμοῦ. These lines occur in the scenes where the hapless Livistros is committed to servitude in the court of Eros.

Now for ὁρισμοῦ. There are no other examples from *Livistros and Rhodamne*. In the *War of Troy* there are five instances; the first is the one already quoted, another puts Achilles in the service of Kouba (= Hekabe) in his quest for Polyxena's love (9949). The rest have no amatory connotations (1561, 2905, 10093). However, the Naples *Tale of Achilles* offers some interesting juxtapositions. Thus:

> Ἔχεις με, Ἔρω, τρίδουλον, δοῦλον δεδουλωμένον·
> ἂν οὐ μ' εὕρεις τοῦ θελήματος καὶ ἔξω τοῦ ὁρισμοῦ σου
> τὸν ἐμαυτόν μου δίδω τον μεθ' ὅλης τῆς καρδίας.[90]

> Eros, you have me as your servant three times over, a servant enslaved;
> if you do not find me beyond your wish and bidding
> I give you my being with all my heart;

and

> εἰ δὲ εἶμαι τοῦ θελήματος καὶ τοῦ ὁρισμοῦ σου δοῦλος,
> διατί νὰ πάσχω, νὰ πονῶ, νὰ θλίβωμαι τοσοῦτον;[91]

> And if I am a servant at your wish and bidding,
> why should I suffer, be in distress and grieve so much?

It would appear from these passages that the author of the *Tale of Achilles* **N** is using a lexical bundle of phrases associated with amatory servitude, whether to a personified Eros or to a lady. It is very tempting to look back to the scene with Jason and Medea – where these phrases are based on Benoît's text – as the impetus towards the phrasing in *Tale of Achilles* **N**. However, in the lines

> καὶ ὅρκον τοὺς ἐζήτησεν ἵνα τὸν θέλουν δώσει,
> νὰ εἶναι ὅλοι ὁμόψυχοι καὶ νὰ πονοῦν δι' ἐκεῖνον·
> καὶ δοῦλοι του ἐγένοντα, δοῦλοι τοῦ ὁρισμοῦ του,[92]

> And he asked them to swear an oath to him
> that they would all become his kindred spirits and labour for him;
> and they became his servants, servants at his bidding,

the phrases involving δοῦλος and ὁρισμού refer to the service his warriors are swearing to give Achilles – so they have a feudatory meaning.

[90] *Tale of Achilles* **N** 1912–14 (Smith). [91] *Tale of Achilles* **N** 916–17 (Smith).
[92] *Tale of Achilles* **N** 289–91 (Smith).

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Furthermore, the line Ἔχεις με, Ἔρω, τρίδουλον, δοῦλον δεδουλωμένον has a history of its own.[93] Τρίδουλος, though not rare, is not a particularly common word, to judge by entries in the TLG – with six forms and fifty-two examples (many in lexica). It occurs once in Achilles Tatius's *Leucippe and Clitophon*,[94] and then has a noticeable revival in the twelfth century. It occurs five times in four forms in Theodore Prodromos's historical poems, all in derogatory contexts.[95] But much more to the point it appears five times in two forms in Makrembolites's *Hysmine and Hysminias*,[96] here undoubtedly prompted by its presence in Achilles Tatius to whom Makrembolites is so indebted.[97] For Makrembolites τρίδουλος becomes something of a leitmotif to express the enslavement of his novel's protagonists both to Eros and to human masters. So, given that *Hysmine and Hysminias* was undoubtedly available in Constantinople in the early years of the fourteenth century,[98] the pattern of indebtedness that was beginning to demonstrate the role of the *War of* Troy in the creation of concepts in the other romances dissolves.

This discussion is a snapshot of the complexities that swirl around the production and circulation of texts in the verse vernacular of the Byzantine world after 1204: a traditional orally derived phraseology (which has hovered in the background to this chapter but was a prominent feature of verse of this type) blended with differently traditional words and motifs that derived from the written learned heritage. The *War of Troy* was produced by a writer who was comfortable with both the French and Greek vernaculars (he references an Anglo-Norman bestiary),[99] who controlled the style associated with traditional vernacular verse (as discussed most recently by Jorie Soltic) and who was not unaware of the higher levels of Greek literary composition. There are, for example, snatches of Constantine Manasses's *Synopsis Chronike* embedded in the *War of Troy*.[100] The same can be said of the Palaiologan romances as a whole. It should not be surprising that hints from the *War of Troy*, as well

[93] *Tale of Achilles* **N** 912 (Smith). [94] 8.1.2.

[95] Theodoros Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte* nos. 14.48; 18.46, 61; 30.197; 77.21 (Hörandner).

[96] *Hysmine and Hysminias* 8.10. 11. 13 and 9.6, 7 (Marcovich).

[97] As demonstrated in Nilsson 2001.

[98] Ms **E** in Marcovich's edition of Makrembolites is part of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci 131 that was compiled in Constantinople in the late thirteenth century (digitized at digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk).

[99] *War of Troy* 13230–44 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys), cf. Guillaume le Clerc, *Bestaire Divin* (Reinsch).

[100] e.g. *War of Troy* 10125–6 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys) quotes Manasses's *Synopsis Chronike* 1405–6; see Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys: lxiv–lxv.

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as from Makrembolites's *Hysmine and Hysminias* and *Digenis Akritis*[101] are woven into their fabric. In this period, we are back with *theatra* like those of the twelfth century when writers tried out their newly minted texts on each other and vied for patronage from members of the élite.[102] In the 1980s Giuseppe Spadaro in a series of articles in *Gymnasium Siculorum* argued for a school of poets swapping phrases with each other. He was not as wrong as proponents of an oral background thought he was, but then neither were they as wrong as he was convinced they were.[103]

In the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries there was a complex interchange across linguistic, political and cultural barriers – symbolized, perhaps, in the fractured remains of the funeral slab for the woman whose marriage to William Villehardouin may have prompted the *Chansonnier du Roi*: Anna Doukaina, daughter of the despot Michael of Epiros.[104] But the *War of Troy* played an important part in that interchange, and the proposed revision to its dating with which this chapter began, emphasizes this.

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[101] The interwoven nature of the Naples version of the *Tale of Achilles* and the text of *Digenis Akritis* as seen through the Grottaferrata version is still best discussed in Mitsakis 1963.
[102] As discussed most recently by Gaul 2017.
[103] Jeffreys and Jeffreys 2016.
[104] Its inscription reads: ICI GIST MADAME AGNES JADIS FILLE DOU DESPOT KIUR MIKAILLE ET [. . .MCCL]XXXVI AS IIII JOURS DE JANVIER; Haines 2013, 107.

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CHAPTER 9

Troy in Byzantine Romances
Homeric Reception in Digenis Akritis*, the* Tale of Achilles *and the* Tale of Troy

Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson

In his field-defining 1975 article on the reception of Homer in Byzantium, Robert Browning surveyed the history of scholarship on the subject and concluded that 'most of these studies have failed to distinguish clearly between incidental quotation of Homeric tags, direct acquaintance with the text, and creative use of Homeric motifs.'[1] In the forty years since Browning made this claim, Homer's place within Byzantine literature and culture has received significantly more detailed treatment, with numerous studies emerging as a result of a disciplinary turn that has focused Byzantine studies on the reception of ancient culture more broadly.[2] This concerns not least the so-called Homeric revival in the twelfth century – a phenomenon that has received intense scholarly interest in the last decade. Twelfth-century Constantinople, which is now known for its creative appropriation of its classical heritage, produced scholarly commentaries and allegorical rewritings of Homeric material, with names such as Eustathios of Thessalonike and John Tzetzes, but Homeric influence is notable also in many other genres such as historiography and fiction.[3] This is of some relevance for the study of Homeric influence on the Palaiologan

[1] Browning 1975: 15.

[2] The direction of the field in this regard has in large part been shaped by Kaldellis 2008, for whom Homer is a central figure. Kaldellis's work marked a change in the understanding of the place of classical antiquity in Byzantium; the previous view can be seen, for instance, in the title of Mango 1981, 'Discontinuity with the Classical Past in Byzantium', which begins by deconstructing 'the myth' that 'represents Byzantium as a beacon of classical civilization shining in the barbarous gloom of the Middle Ages' (48). For a survey of some Homeric adaptations in Byzantium beyond the romance tradition, see Nilsson 2004. For Homer in Byzantine visual culture, see Pontani 2015 and Graziosi 2015; for the place of Greek tragedies, including those dealing with Trojan War themes, in the Byzantine educational system, see Easterling 2003. For three brief theological and allegorical interpretations of Homer in the Palaiologan period, see Browning 1992.

[3] For a recent update, focusing on Eustathios but offering a good presentation of the context, see Cullhed 2016: 1*–33*. See also Cullhed 2014. For a discussion of Tzetzes and Eustathios in the context of Homer in the twelfth century, see Lavagnini 2016: 236–38. On twelfth-century literature in general, see Nilsson 2014.

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romances, since – as we shall see – both historiographical and novelistic texts of the twelfth century influenced the composition of romances of the Palaiologan period, thus passing on various Homeric motifs and techniques.

In light of more recent studies of the adaptation of ancient literature in Byzantium, Browning's division of the types of Homeric reception into three categories – incidental quotation, direct textual citation and creative use of Homeric motifs – may seem a bit blunt.[4] First, 'incidental quotation' of Homer is both the least easily defined of the terms and the least interesting manifestation of the reception of Homer. In the case of the Palaiologan romances, Panagiotis Agapitos has noted the ways in which Homeric formulas had become conventional phrases ultimately divorced from their origins in ancient oral epic:

> Early on Greek poetic diction developed sets of expressions to establish the alternating sequence of narrative and discoursive [*sic*] sections within a given text . . . What in early epic was an oral device to alert the listeners and help them follow the progress of the story, became a fixed formula in later Greek literature.[5]

Such 'fixed formulas' were accordingly part of the shared linguistic and literary inheritance and did not necessarily indicate a Homeric reception. Second, 'direct textual citation' is not always easily distinguishable from the first category, since citation of ancient literature in Byzantium was part of an overall mimetic practice that encouraged adaptation and manipulation. Citation thus often borders on verbal allusion, which – just as 'incidental quotation' – could be part of a literary discourse. Third, the 'creative use of Homeric motifs' does not cover all other kinds of adapting Homer. Palaiologan romances certainly adapt Homeric motifs, but they also adapt narrative techniques – both, perhaps, directly from Homer and via earlier Byzantine representations of Homeric stories. To consider the way in which stories are told from a diachronic perspective is a central concern of post-classical narratology, slowly finding its way into Greek and Byzantine studies.[6]

[4] Cf. e.g. Nilsson 2010 and Marciniak 2013.

[5] Agapitos 1991: 65. The romance use of Homeric phrasing for the passage of time is discussed again on pp. 234 and 239. Agapitos also mentions various examples drawn from the earlier Komnenian novels as well as the Palaiologan romances (66–73). See also p. 130 for the ways in which 'Ancient Greek and Byzantine literature' employed 'narrative frames', a practice that began 'with the Homeric poems', and 206–7 for how laments, a common feature of the romances, 'became part of the literary canon through their presence in Book 24 of the *Ilias*'.

[6] The 'diachronization' of narratology was proposed by Monika Fludernik and adapted by Irene de Jong; Fludernik 2003; de Jong 2014: 6. The aim is to look at the development of narrative techniques over time, introduce a historical dimension and combine synchronic and diachronic

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The Palaiologan romances are characterized in part by the frequency and variety of their creative use of Homeric epic and the Trojan War narrative. One of the earliest of the Palaiologan romances, the *War of Troy*,[7] as well as the latest, the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy*, seem to lack the detailed knowledge of the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* that we find in the grammatical or scholastic traditions of, for instance, Eustathios or Tzetzes; though they follow the basic plot of the Trojan War and both refer explicitly to Homer, their anonymous authors dress the epic plot in romance clothing. By contrast, the anonymous thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century Grottaferrata manuscript of *Digenis Akritis* emplots the Homeric narrative in the rhetoric and genre conventions of romance; the anonymous author interpolates recognizable Homeric-type scenes within an otherwise romance plot. The reception of Homeric epic and Homeric narrative elements in the romance tradition was not uniform; different authors dealt with Homer in different ways, and this chapter will offer a survey of some of the ways in which these authors did so. Our focus will be on motifs and narrative techniques rather than on citations and allusions, even though the latter sometimes are employed in order to enhance the effect of the former. We thus work from the assumption that the distinction between content and form is significant, but that the two often overlap and are combined in order to produce an efficient and plausible narrative.[8]

In so doing, this chapter seeks to rebut a history of the Palaiologan romances generally and of the *Tale of Troy* and the *Tale of Achilles* in particular that accepts as a truism that the authors of the poems had very little knowledge of the Homeric epics. Thus, for instance, Ole Smith, the modern editor of the *Tale of Achilles*, asserts in his commentary that the use of the word Myrmidons might be 'a reference to Homer in a text with otherwise very little Homeric flavor . . . the explicit connections between the Byzantine Achilles and the Homeric hero are very slight'.[9] Yet even Smith finds the previous position of Hans-Georg Beck too anti-Homeric, taking issue with his claim that 'the *Achilleid* is the "farewell to philology," since Homer appears only in the names'.[10] For a similar and more recent appraisal, Renata Lavagnini argues that

perspectives. For the importance of such an approach in Byzantine studies, see Nilsson (forthcoming).

[7] For the *War of Troy*, see Chapters 7, 8 and 12 in the present volume. [8] Cf. Nilsson 2004.

[9] Smith 1999: 84. [10] Smith 1999: 84.

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> the reader will be surprised to find such a major deformation of the heroic myth of Troy precisely in the milieu of that Greek world in which it had come into being. In this respect, the Homeric characters of the main protagonist, Paris, can hardly be recognized. Even more distant from the ancient mode is Achilles, the protagonist of the . . . *Achilleid*, which actually presents all the features of a typical romance of love, and only harks back to the Trojan War and its heroes in the title.[11]

Such readings, however, are based on a perhaps ideologically convincing but philologically unsustainable clear-cut distinction between vernacular and learned literatures and a too narrow definition of what constitutes such borrowings.[12]

Homeric Motifs and Techniques in *Digenis Akritis*

Any discussion of *Digenis* as a literary work within an identifiable tradition and literary genealogy, and thus of speaking about recognizable sources of influence, is complicated by the lack of a single definitive text. *Digenis* survives in six versions, which can be roughly classified into two strands of transmission with wide variation among the various iterations. Jeffreys notes that 'we must not assume that "accurate copies" (in the modern sense) were the norm and "rewriting" was the exception. Nearly all our evidence suggests the opposite.'[13] Thus, a thorough analysis of the issue of Homeric reception would have to account for all six, possibly with speculation about the hypothetical ancestor of the later group (which Jeffreys calls Z),[14] which comprises the manuscripts **T**(rebizond), **A**(thens), **P**(aschalis) and **O**(xford), as well as the hypothetical urtext (so-called **Digenis*) which joins this thread to the earlier one, which comprises **G**(rottaferrata) and **E**(scorial). But given that **G** is the only extant version that can be clearly dated to the Palaiologan period, this is the version which most closely bears on the reception of Homer in the medieval Greek romance: Jeffreys suggests that the manuscript can be 'dated by current palaeographical criteria to the late thirteenth or fourteenth centuries.'[15] Though Jeffreys and Beaton agree that **Digenis* was perhaps composed in the twelfth century, it does not necessarily follow that, in light of the

[11] Lavagnini 2016: 234.
[12] For the contrast between learned and vernacular reworkings of the Trojan War in Byzantium, see Lavagnini 2016: 239. Cf. e.g. Agapitos 2004: 15 and Agapitos 2012: 245 on the dichotomy between 'learned' and 'vernacular' literature in Byzantium.
[13] Jeffreys 1998: xxiii. See also Jouanno 2016: 261–4 for further discussion.
[14] Jeffreys 1998: xxi.
[15] Jeffreys 1998: xx. Jeffreys dates **E** to the late fifteenth c.

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freedom with which authors rewrote the narrative itself, this particular work should not be seen as a product of late Byzantine literary culture, that is, the author could perhaps be seen as casting an earlier oral folk tradition into the genre conventions and stylized language of the late medieval Greek romance, complete with the level of Homeric allusion expected of works composed during the period by authors whose foundational education centred on the Homeric texts.[16]

The most obvious place to start is the two moments in the text in which the Trojan War is explicitly mentioned. At the beginning of Book IV, the authorial voice breaks into the narrative to exhort the reader to not disbelieve his story for the incredible heroism of the Emir and his son. The Emir, he says 'was thought to be a second Samson' (δεύτερος Σαμψὼν αὐτὸς ἐπενοήθη) because Samson killed a single lion with his bare hands, while the Emir 'killed a boundless host of lions' (πλῆθος ἄπειρον ἀπέκτεινε λεόντων).[17] After this comparison to Samson, the narrator commands: 'Cease writing of Homer and the legends of Achilles | and likewise of Hektor; these are false' (Παύσασθε γράφειν Ὅμηρον καὶ μύθους Ἀχιλλέως | ὡσαύτος καὶ τοῦ Ἕκτορος, ἅπερ εἰσὶ ψευδέα).[18] The author of the *Digenis* is making a clear comparison: the heroes of the past (including Alexander the Great, referenced in the next line) were great; the heroes whom he describes are far greater still. The reference to Homer does, however, serve a different, though equally important function: though it 'does not imply very close acquaintance with the text of the *Iliad* . . . but the tale of Digenis is unmistakably here claiming its place in the prestigious literary tradition of which Homer stands at the head.'[19]

The second appearance of subject matter from the Trojan War is in many ways a rearticulation of the same earlier passage with fundamentally the same purpose, placing the son in the same heroic genealogy as the earlier reference had done for the father. As Book VII opens, Digenis builds a grand palace in the borderlands, on the interior of which 'he recorded the triumphs of all the illustrious men of valour | from the past in beautiful

[16] That is not to say that there is no Homeric influence on the other versions. As David Ricks notes, for instance, the **E** version which is descended from **G** a century later, contains in its opening sentence a 'proportion of direct speech (368 out of 609 surviving verses) [that] is notably high', leading him to refer to the poet's 'aims and attainments as Homeric'. At the broader level of authorial and narrative perspective, too, he argues that 'the conflict is as much articulated by the participants as it is told. Second, this poem of conflict presupposes and indeed embeds . . . but also distances itself from, a tradition of uncomplicated heroism' (Ricks 1993: 163, quoting Ricks 1990: 19). See also Chapter 11 in the present volume.

[17] *Digenis Akritis* 4.24 and 4.26 (Jeffreys). [18] *Digenis Akritis* 4.27–8 (Jeffreys).

[19] Beaton 1996: 47.

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mosaics of gold' (πάντων τὰ τρόπαια τῶν πάλαι ἐν ἀνδρείᾳ | λαμψάντων ἀνιστόρησε χρυσόμουσα, ὡραῖα).[20] Among biblical scenes depicting Samson battling the Philistines, David killing Goliath, and Moses freeing the Jews, as well as scenes from the life of Alexander, are three scenes from classical mythology:

> Ἀχιλλέως ἱστόρησε τοὺς μυθικοὺς πολέμους,
> τὸ κάλλος Ἀγαμέμνονος, σφαγὴν τὴν ὀλεθρίαν,
> Πηνελόπην τὴν σώφρονα, τοὺς κτανθέντας νυμφίους,
> Ὀδυσσέως τὴν θαυμαστὴν πρὸς τὸν Κύκλωπα τόλμην,
> Βελλεροφόντην κτείναντα Χίμαιραν τὴν πυρφόρον.

He recorded Achilles' legendary wars, | the beauty of Agamemnon, the deadly slaughter, | wise Penelope, the suitors who were slain, | Odysseus' marvellous daring against the Cyclops, | Bellerophon killing the fire-bearing Chimaira.[21]

By couching the comparison in the language of ekphrasis, the author is able to convey the superiority of Digenis to the other great heroes of the past indirectly; it is not his own opinion, he is merely describing what he sees depicted. Though the passage is described in ekphrasis rather than in the author's own voice, and though it is slightly more elaborated than in the previous instance, the passages both position Digenis in relation to the biblical and classical heroes of the past. Indeed, the heroes mentioned in the first instance are named again: Samson, Achilles and Alexander.

As in the first instance, the characters drawn from classical mythology are drawn specifically from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. 'Achilles' legendary war' is no doubt a reference to the Trojan War, while the references to Odysseus, the Cyclops and Penelope are all from the *Odyssey*; 'the beauty of Agamemnon' and 'his deadly slaughter' are both contained within the Homeric epics as well.[22] Even the most obscure of the references, the reference to Bellerophon and Chimaira, goes back to Homer.[23] The author of *Digenis*, therefore, evokes not classical myth generally, but only those aspects of classical myth referenced in the *Iliad*. His new Byzantine hero is a wanderer like Odysseus and a supreme warrior like Achilles. As Beaton noted with regard to the previous reference to the heroes of the Trojan War, neither does this instance prove the author's familiarity with the actual texts of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* rather than certain broadly

[20] *Digenis Akritis* 7.61–2 (Jeffreys). [21] *Digenis Akritis* 7.85–89 (Jeffreys).
[22] See Baldwin 1988.
[23] *Iliad* 6.155–203. In the *Iliad*, Chimaera is described as δεινὸν ἀποπνείουσα πυρὸς μένος αἰθομένοιο (6.182) This similar attribute, though with different phrasing, is found in *Digenis Akritis* 7.89 with πυρφόρον.

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conceived generalizations about the principals: the episode of Odysseus and the Cyclops, for instance, is that hero's most famous deed, just as Bellerophon is most famous for killing the Chimaera, and Agamemnon is most famous for the manner of his death. What this passage does reveal, however, as in the former instance, is the author's insistence that we read his hero, and thus the work as a whole, within the broader context of the Greek tradition (including both its biblical and ancient Greek inheritance). These passing references place Digenis in relationship to the great heroes of the Greek tradition, resulting in a comparison among them which ultimately reveals Digenis's supremacy.

This way of reading *Digenis* as a work of comparative heroism is emphasized implicitly in the Homerization of the narrative and narratological structures through which the story is presented. At the level of narrative, the author of *Digenis* places his characters in situations that echo those faced by their Homeric predecessors. Eliso Elizbarashvili, for instance, notes the emplotment of Homer scenes in the 'Lay of the Emir' of which

> the best example is the fight between Menelaus and Paris in the *Iliad*. The single combat between Emir Mousour and Constantine bears similarities to that in the *Iliad*: the two sides are in confrontion [*sic*] because of a woman, the abductor is defeated, and the terms made are broken.[24]

That is, like the *Iliad*, *Digenis* is the story of a woman unjustly stolen and forced into marriage, and the hostilities that ensue in order to bring her back. Such a comparison, however, is perhaps overly broad, since woman-stealing and heroic rescue is as much a fundamental trope of romance as Homer: it is, for instance, the central motif of the most famous of the western medieval romances, Chrétien de Troyes's *Knight of the Cart*, which begins with Maleagant's kidnapping of Guinevere and ends with him dying at Lancelot's hand in single combat. Similar kidnap–rescue motifs can be found from across the romance tradition, in Gottfried van Strassburg's *Tristan* and elsewhere.

What makes *Digenis* Homeric, then, is not only these broad-brush plot summaries at the level of narrative, but the way these events are presented narratologically. For instance, as Digenis begins his wandering along the frontier, the narrative voice shifts from third-person omniscient to first person, which has been identified as an imitation of the *Odyssey*.[25] While it seems more likely that the influence for such focalization comes from the

[24] Elizbarashvili 2010: 441. [25] Trapp 1971: 69–70, cited by Beaton 1996: 39.

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novelistic tradition rather than directly from Homer,[26] it certainly is through the combination of the events told in the narrative and the manner in which they are told that the poem displays its Homeric influence. It is more than just the woman-stealing that makes *Digenis Akritis* Homeric, and the construction of certain scenes support such an influence.

The opening scene of *Digenis Akritis* features an embassy by the male relatives of the opposing army who have come to ransom the abducted woman. The embassy of the girl's brothers at the opening of the poem thus echoes the embassy of Chryses with which the *Iliad* opens, down to the exchange of the girl for ransom.[27] And as Agamemnon, the Emir initially refuses; unlike Agamemnon, however, the Emir does not relent, rather, he improves upon his Homeric ancestor by taking the girl in marriage (in contrast to Agamemnon, who had threatened to keep her as a sex slave) and converting to Christianity. Thus, the author of *Digenis* transposes the familiar Homeric scene into a Byzantine milieu: instead of Greek/Trojan strife, it is Greek/Arab strife, instead of a father coming to ransom his captured daughter, it is brothers coming for their sister. Nevertheless, the Homeric contours of this opening scene are twisted at the last minute to offer an unexpected resolution: instead of plague and more strife, the acceptance of matrimony and conversion results in peace and increased political power without the need for further war.

Book II opens with a Homeric parallel which once again proves the superiority of the Emir to Agamemnon. In the *Iliad*, Book II opens with Zeus sending Agamemnon a false dream, urging him to attack Troy and guaranteeing his victory. When morning comes, Agamemnon calls a council of the Greek army, whom he then tries to test by inviting them to flee to their ships and go home should they so choose; in an unexpected twist, all the men flee to the ships and are barely restrained, thus significantly diminishing Agamemnon's stature as hero and leader. Book II of *Digenis* opens in similar fashion. The Emir, like the men, plans to return to his home and abandon his new-found brothers-in-law and foreswear his oaths. But whereas in the *Iliad*, the dream sent by Zeus is a 'destructive dream' (οὖλον ὄνειρον),[28] the dream sent by God in *Digenis Akritis* is 'an unexpected wonder' (τι θαυματουργῶν παράδοξον).[29] Unlike the

[26] Both Achilles Tatius and Makrembolites employed first-person narration in their novels, the latter most probably being influenced by the former. To what extent Tatius and other early novelists employed first-person narration as a Homeric device is still a matter of debate.

[27] *Digenis Akritis* 1.106–7 (Jeffreys): Πώλησον ταύτην πρὸς ἡμᾶς ... | καὶ ἀντ'αὐτῆς σοι δώσομεν πλοῦτον ὅσον κελεύεις; *Iliad* 1.20: παῖδα δ' ἐμοὶ λύσαιτε φίλην, τὰ δ' ἄποινα δέχεσθαι.

[28] *Il.* 2.6.

[29] *Digenis Akritis* 2.134 (Jeffreys).

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destructive dream sent by Zeus, the 'unexpected wonder' that the true God sent leads to happier fortunes. When his plan is discovered, the Emir apologizes, and secures his alliance with her brothers[30] and is able to leave publicly and in good standing. As with Book I, Book II opens within a recognizably Homeric parallel frame: first, ransom for the daughter; second, a scene in which characters dream and seek to return home. But also as in the rearticulation of Book I, the Homeric frame of Book II ends in a way that reverses the destructive agency of the pagan Zeus and the loss of life that results from Agamemnon's poor decision-making. Rather, the true God 'brought the secret plan to life through a dream' (τὸ κρύφιον βούλευμα κατ' ὄναρ εἰς φῶς ἄγει)[31] and instead glorifies the Emir, who is able to both cement his alliance with his brothers-in-law and return home, thus offering a counter-narrative resolution to the scene of Agamemnon's great blunder.

Homeric Motifs and Techniques in the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy*

Two of the Palaiologan romances have a more direct way of romancing Troy by reimagining the Homeric heroes more according to the ideological and aesthetic conventions of the romance tradition: Achilles in the *Tale of Achilles* and Paris in the *Tale of Troy*.

The *Tale of Achilles* is usually dated to the middle of the fourteenth century and considered to be the earlier of the two poems. A general storyline can be abstracted from the three preserved versions, of which the Naples manuscript (N) contains the fullest one.[32] Achilles, son of the king of Greece, at an early age shows great intellectual and physical strength, but in spite of his apparent sex appeal he despises love and its powers. He does, however, fall in love and is, by Eros's intervention, convinced to pursue his passion, abducts the girl, and marries her. But the end of the love story is not a happy one: after six years of blissful marriage, the girl falls ill and dies, leaving Achilles alone with his grief. This is where two of

[30] *Digenis Akritis* 2.249 (Jeffreys): Ὁ δὲ καὶ συνεχώρησε πάντας καταφιλήσας.
[31] *Digenis Akritis* 2.135 (Jeffreys).
[32] In the following we cite the ed. of **N** by Smith 1999, which also includes a revised version of Smith's edition of O, first printed in 1990, along with a discussion of the dating of the text. For an earlier ed. of redactions **N** and L, see Hesseling 1999. A revised version of Hesseling's **N** with an Italian translation is to be found in Cupane 1995. On the complex textual situation, e.g. Lavagnini 1969–70, 1988 and, her most recent appraisal, 2016 (with detailed summary of the plot in pp. 240–4); see also Keydell 1979, Smith 1991–2 and Smith 1999: 177–82.

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the versions break off, whereas **N** follows an account of the Trojan War, closing with Achilles's death at the hands of Paris.

In the late Byzantine context, the epic warrior-lover par excellence has clearly been developed on the level of romance: in the Naples version, the poem opens with a prologue on the workings of love (1–20), signalling the romance to come; in spite of his 'Hippolytic' behaviour, Achilles is forced to realize and accept the power of love.[33] However, the *Tale of Achilles* is not entirely void of references to the Homeric epics. The anonymous poet-narrator writes that he has read Homer, and that his goal is to 'translate it into clearer words, so that the masses, those not learned in letters', may learn the story of Achilles as well (μετεβάλομεν αὐτὴν εἰς σαφεστέραν ῥῆσιν, | ὅπως γνωρίζουν οἱ πολλοί, οἱ μὴ μαθόντες λόγους).[34] Though possibly nothing more than a rhetorical stance, this programmatic statement still suggests that whatever Homeric echoes there may be in the poem are not simply coincidental, but purposefully allusive. Indeed, Ole Smith, writes of the 'echoes of Homer that one can find in the . . . text', though he never goes on to elucidate what these are or where they are to be found.[35] But a comparative reading of the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Iliad* may reveal several such Homeric echoes.

Such a possible Homeric influence on the *Tale of Achilles* is what Smith calls 'the special relationship between Achilles and his mother'.[36] Smith never connects this directly with Homer, but the relationship between Achilles and his mother is similar in both the *Tale of Achilles* and in the *Iliad*. In each case, she is concerned about his desire to participate in battle and fears for his safety. In the *Iliad*, when Thetis hears Achilles grieving over the dead Patroclus, she comes from the sea with her divine Nereid sisters, and when he expresses his intention to return to the war, Thetis says, while crying, 'then I must lose you soon, my child, by what you are saying, since it is decreed your death must come soon after Hector's' (τὸν δ' ὠκύμορος δή μοι τέκος ἔσσεαι, οἷ' ἀγορεύεις: | αὐτίκα γάρ τοι ἔπειτα μεθ' Ἕκτορα πότμος ἑτοῖμος).[37] The literary aesthetic of the *Tale of Achilles*, like every account of the Trojan War in the Christian world, eliminates the pagan divinities, and thus Achilles's immortal mother Thetis in the *Iliad* becomes Achilles's mortal unnamed mother in the *Tale of Achilles*. Despite the fact that she is no longer divine, her primary Iliadic

[33] Cf. the behaviour of the hero in Makrembolites's twelfth-century *Hysmine and Hysminias*, on which see Nilsson 2001: 125 and 152.

[34] *Tale of Achilles* 1908–9 (Smith). All translations of the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy* are our own.

[35] Smith 1999: 84. [36] Smith 1999: 94. [37] *Il.* 18.95–6.

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character trait – her overwhelming concern for her son – remains, though this concern is transfigured from the concern of a divine mother who knows the future, that is, that he will die at Troy, into the more humanized concern of a mortal mother whose son is going off to war. In the *Tale of Achilles*, when Achilles goes off to war,

> Ἡ μήτηρ του ἐθλίβετον διὰ τὴν ὑστέρησίν του,
> ἔβλεπεν δὲ τῆν θαυμαστὴν ἀνδρείαν τοῦ παιδίου,
> ἀλλὰ ἐφοβᾶτον πάντοτε τὸ ἄπειρον τῆς μάχης.

His mother grieved, for she would miss him. | She saw the wondrous valour of her child | but was very afraid because he was untried in battle.[38]

Indeed, as he goes off to battle, the narrator gives a description of Achilles's armour at a level of detail that is unusual in Byzantine romance:

> Στολὴν ἐφόρεσεν λαμπράν, ὀρωτικήν, ὡραία,
> ὀξὺν ἐσωκουρτσούβακον μὲ τὰ χρυσὰ πουλία
> καὶ ἄλλον χρυσοπράσινον μετὰ λιθομαργάρων.
> εἶχεν ἡ τραχηλέα του καὶ τὰ μανίκια γῦρον
> λιθάρια πανυπέρλαμπρα μετὰ λιθομαργάρων.
> ἐφόρεσεν καὶ στέφανον ἐκεῖνο < >.
> Πολλὰ τὸν ἠναγκάσασιν ἵνα τσαγκί φορέσῃ,
> ἀλλὰ ποσῶς οὐ θέλησεν τοῦτο νὰ τὸ ποιήσῃ,
> ἀλλὰ τουβίτσια ἐφόρεσεν καὶ ἀραβίτικα βλαττία,
> χρυσὰ καὶ αὐτὰ καὶ πάντερπνα, ἐρωτικὰ εἰς θέαν.

He wore a brilliant robe, most elegant, beautiful, | dazzling pants with golden birds over pants of green gold and and pearls. | His necklace and bracelets had around them | glittering gems with pearls, | and he wore a crown < >. They strongly urged him to wear the imperial boots, | but he did not wish at all to do this, | so instead he wore shoes and Arabic footwear, golden and entirely handsome, lovely to behold.[39]

In Book XVIII of the *Iliad*, Thetis goes to Hephaestus to ask for new armour for Achilles, which leads to the famous description of Achilles's armour and his shield, which has etched upon it the entire world in miniature. As with the previous instance, the narrator, in his attempt to 'translate' the story of Achilles for a Byzantine audience, maintains the Iliadic frame but alters the details to suit the contemporary context of its production. That is, he takes out both the divine and archaic elements.

[38] *Tale of Achilles* 223–5 (Smith). [39] *Tale of Achilles* 366–76 (Smith).

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Thus, the poet retains the basic motif, Hephaestus crafting armour in his Olympian workshop, but recasts Achilles's arming scene into its Byzantine context, with rich dress appropriate to a Byzantine nobleman.[40] In a not unusual anachronism, the word τσαγκί, translated here as 'imperial boots' is, in fact, the word which Smith in his commentary calls 'luxurious boots worn only by the emperor'.[41] Obviously, such boots would be somewhat out of place in Greece in the eighth century BCE. Indeed, Smith argues that Achilles's clothes are heavy with contemporary Byzantine significance: 'The description of his dress and insignia makes it plain that he is appearing as *despotes* ... the reference to the crown of the *despotes* is obvious. On the other hand, ... the *tsangia* were the formal footwear of the Emperor.'[42]

It is certainly true that the Achilles of the *Tale of Achilles* has few resemblances to the Trojan hero, but he is perhaps more than, as Hesseling called him in 1919, 'un Digénis baptisé d'un nom classique',[43] a position that can still be heard nearly a century later in Lavagnini's assertion that 'very little of the Homeric hero is left in the story, apart from the name'.[44] Perhaps it is not that the Homeric hero is gone, but that he was transformed for contextual and generic reasons; he is suitable for a contemporary audience, linguistically distant from the learned language of the earlier tradition, but also highly influenced by a western kind of romance tradition that was marked by different narrative priorities. In order to present stories that were still central for Byzantine audiences, identifying with the Graeco-Roman tradition, they had to be made relevant on social, cultural and literary levels, while also being accessible from a linguistic perspective. The Achilles in this romance offers a window into Byzantium much more than a window into Homeric society, and yet, it is only through the use of Homeric material that this window can be opened. Accordingly, the author of the Byzantine *Tale of Achilles* takes significant motifs from ancient Greek epic – Achilles's relationship with his mother and his arming scene – and adapts them to suit the aesthetic of Byzantine vernacular romance.

Similar but different ways of dealing with Homeric material can be found in the other poem, the *Tale of Troy*. Preserved only in one manuscript, this poem has a less complicated textual tradition (as it has come down to us). It was composed rather late in a very long narrative

[40] Cf. Agapitos 2012: 288–9 on the 'antiquarianism' of Achilles's clothing. [41] Smith 1999: 99.
[42] Smith 1999: 99. [43] Hesseling 1919: 9; see also Smith 1991–2: 75, and cf. Beaton 1996: 116.
[44] Lavagnini 2016: 244; see also Lavgini 2016: 245 for a comparison of Achilles and Digenis.

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tradition – usually it is dated to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries – and displays links with a large number of texts and is perhaps the most complicated of the Byzantine vernacular romances when it comes to textual relations.[45] The basic structure is, at first sight, similar to that of the *Tale of Achilles*: a romance-type story (1–779) is followed by a 'Homeric' second part on the Trojan War (780–1138), but at the end follows a kind of epilogue in the form of a lament for Achilles (1139–66).[46]

The hero is Paris, whose love story with Helen makes perfect romance matter, but the story here differs from both Homer and Byzantine chronicles.[47] The story sets out with the well-known prophetic dream of Hekabe and the subsequent birth of Paris. After the advice of the king's advisers that the child must die, he is – after some deliberation and to the despair of his parents – placed in an elaborate coffin and exposed at sea. Found and raised by a good man, he is a few years later reunited with his parents and locked into an exquisite tower together with some young boys of the same age. After he accidentally kills one of the other boys, he escapes from Troy and is shipwrecked and washed ashore on an island. He is cared for by some monks and lives with them at the monastery, where he is eventually introduced to the court of Menelaos and meets Helen. They try to resist their desire but it too strong, and when Helen becomes pregnant they elope to Troy. Then follows the account of the Trojan War, in which the narrative focus shifts from Paris to Achilles. After the latter has been killed by Paris and Deiphobos, he appears in a dream and tells the Greeks to kill 'Paris and Priam and all of their race' (τὸν Πάρι καὶ τὸν Πριάμον καὶ ὅλον του τὸ γένος)[48] by his grave, and the poem ends in a terrifying libation of blood and an invocation of Hades.[49]

Most scholars have argued that there are no Homeric traits in the *Tale of Troy*, but the structure and presentation of the poem should be considered

[45] On the dating and (inter)textual issues, see e.g. the ed. by Nørgaard and Smith 1975: 9–10 and 12–13; Jeffreys 1978: 116, n. 19; Spadaro 1977–8. For a detailed summary of the plot, see Lavagnini 2016: 246–8. The early dismissal of the *Tale of Troy* as a *Mischmasch* or badly composed cento is no longer relevant in view of our better understanding of imitative practices in Byzantium.

[46] The tripartite structure was noted in Norgard and Smith 1975: 8.

[47] The chronicle that had most influence on both the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy* was the twelfth-century verse chronicle by Constantine Manasses, which includes a rather long section on the war of Troy: *Synopsis Chronike* 1108–1470 (Lampsidis). See also below, n. 50.

[48] *Tale of Troy* 1122 (Nørgaard and Smith).

[49] Homer does not narrate the death of Achilles, but in Euripides Hecuba – one of the Byzantine school plays – Polyxena is sacrificed at the tomb of Achilles soon before the Argives leave Troy. In Manasses's *Synopsis Chronike*, the death of Achilles is included (by way of Malalas?), but not the sacrifice at the tomb.

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from a Homeric perspective. First, there are no less than three mentions of Homer, rather evenly distributed throughout the poem (8, 795, 1056). As in the case of the *Tale of Achilles*, these references should be seen as purposefully allusive, indicating the significance of the origin of the story. The second and third both refer to the act of narrating the story that Homer once wrote, but doing it in a brief manner and for 'regular people':

ὁ μέγας ὁ διδάσκαλος καὶ ὁ σοφὸς Ἑλλήνων
Ὅμηρος βίβλον ἔπλασεν τὰ τῆς Τρωάδος πάθη,
ἅπαντα γὰρ τὰ γέγονεν, ἀφανισμὸς τῆς Τρώας.
ἡμεῖς γάρ τι παραμικρὸν τὸ κατὰ τῆς δυνάμης
εἰς ἰδιῶτας παιδινὰ γράφω τὰ τῆς Τρωάδος,
ὅπως γνωρίζουν ἅπαντες τὰ πράγματα τοῦ κόσμου.

The great teacher and the wise man of Greeks, | Homer, composed a book of the Trojan events, | all that happened, the destruction of Troy. | But we write something more modest, according to our ability, | for regular people and in a simple manner about what happened at Troy | so that all may learn about the things of the world.[50]

This calls to mind the statement made by the author of the *Tale of Achilles*, and also of the authorial comments made by Konstantinos Hermoniakos, who composed a *metaphrasis* of the *Iliad* in the first part of the fourteenth century.[51] This means that the way in which stories are narrated must be adapted to new needs, but at the same time we can see certain similarities between the epic narration and the late Byzantine adaptations. The description of the content of the *Tale of Troy* offered above indicates some influence from contemporary romance literature (*Apollonius King of Tyre* and *Imperios and Margarona*), such as the stay in a monastery and some of the wooing scenes between Paris and Helen.[52] But once the Trojan War begins, familiar episodes from the *Iliad* succeed each other: among others, the catalogue of ships (786–91), Achilles's withdrawal from the battle because of Briseis/Chryseis (800–17), and the fight between Menelaos and Paris (897–949) interrupted, as in the *Iliad*, by a *teichoskopia* ('viewing

[50] *Tale of Troy* 1057–62 (Nørgaard and Smith). On this passage, see also Agapitos 2004: 48.

[51] Hermoniakos, *Metaphrasis of the Iliad* 1.7–9 and 23–7 (Legrand). Cf. also Manasses, *Synopsis Chronike* 7–9 (Lampsidis) and his comments on Homer; John Tzetzes, *Allegories of the Iliad* (Boissonade) 32–4; Hermoniakos's metaphrasis is usually not seen as a romance, but the links to romance writing are rather clear, also as regards the ambition to make Homer accessible to a wider audience. Moreover, the shared use of the works of Manasses and Tzetzes is worth taking into consideration. See Nilsson 2004 on such links between mythology, historiography and romance.

[52] See Nørgaard and Smith 1975: 11.

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from the walls') (908–36) and followed by a brief authorial intervention and then the death of Hektor at the hand of Achilles (955–64).[53]

The teichoscopy is of particular interest, because it is such an important narrative device in the *Iliad* (3.121–244) and a recurring narrative strategy in ancient literature.[54] The viewing from the walls allows the narrator to step back from the action and refocalize the narration from the perspective of Helen. Even if Helen does not get to voice her perspective in the compressed version of the *Tale of Troy*, the viewing is still there and it takes place thanks to Helen's own initiative (not, as in the *Iliad*, because of Iris):

> θέλει ἡ κόρη ν᾿ ἀνεβῇ, θέλει νὰ πᾷ στὸν πύργον
> νὰ παρασκύψῃ καὶ νὰ ἰδῇ, τίς ἐκ τοὺς δυὸ κερδίσῃ.
> ἀρχόντισσες εὐγενικὲς αὐτὴν ἀκολουθοῦσιν,
> περνοῦν καὶ διαβαίνουσιν στὴν λόντζα καὶ εἰς τὴν πόρταν,
> ἐκεῖ ὁποῦ ἐκάθονταν οἱ ἄρχοντες τῆς Τρώας.

The girl wants to climb up, she wants to go to the tower | to see and watch which of the two will win. | The noble leading ladies accompany her; | they pass and go through to the *loggia* and the door, there where the leaders of Troy are sitting.[55]

After a courteous ceremony of bowing and amazement at Helen's beauty ('the light of the evening star, a ray of the sun, a piece of heaven' etc.), the leaders of Troy speak not about the war per se but about the beauty of Helen and the war as its result: 'what happens because of such beauty is right' (δίκαιον εἶν᾿ τὰ γίνονται διὰ τοσοῦτον κάλλος) – an echo of the Iliadic lines of the corresponding scene, 'Small blame that Trojans and well-greaved Achaeans | should for such a woman long time suffer woes' (οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ ἐϋκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς | τοιῇδ᾿ ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν).[56] In spite of the rather drastic rewriting, the Byzantine version of the story thus maintains not only characters and motifs, but also narrative techniques and even faint textual echoes of the *Iliad* – even if the transmission of such 'textual' echoes may have been through intermediary sources or even oral.

As we have seen, both of these Byzantine Troy romances are firmly placed in the vernacular tradition, written in political verse and with numerous similarities with *Digenis*, but it has also been shown that they

[53] See Nørgaard and Smith 1975: 12 for a list of Iliadic episodes.
[54] For the significance of the presence or absence of a teichoscopy for the tradition of Trojan War writing in the twelfth c., see Lavagnini 2016: 251. For the corresponding scene in the *War of Troy*, see Chapter 12 in the present volume.
[55] *Tale of Troy* 908–11 (Nørgaard and Smith).
[56] *Tale of Troy* 924 (Nørgaard and Smith); *Il.* 3.156–7.

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received their Troy matter at least partly through the twelfth-century chronicle by Konstantinos Manasses, *Synopsis Chronike*.[57] Manasses's chronicle was a learned but entertaining work, written in political verse, that turned some historical events into 'novelistic' episodes, including the Trojan War.[58] It thus seems to have opened up possibilities for the kind of romance adaptation that we see in the two Palaiologan poems, and it seems possible that not only the representation of the war was influenced by Manasses's chronicle, but also the narrative arrangement of the story as a whole. In the *Tale of Achilles*, the placement of the prologue on the power of Eros is reminiscent of the much briefer invocation of Eros at the beginning of the Troy episode in the *Synopsis Chronike*.[59] In both cases, the mentioning of Eros's power signals the erotic story to follow. In the *Tale of Troy*, the opening of the story (Hecuba's dream and the events which follow) is the same as in the *Synopsis Chronike*, though the details of the story soon develop in a more romance like direction in the *Tale of Troy*. At the same time, as we have seen, other narrative strategies and recycling of Homeric motifs seem to indicate a closer or different relationship with the *Iliad* than the *Synopsis Chronike* as an intermediary source would allow.

Genre Bending in the Homeric Romances and Beyond

Digenis Akritis, the *Tale of Troy* and the *Tale of Achilles* represent various forms of Homeric reception in the Palaiologan romances, though certainly by no means the only examples. As discussed elsewhere in this volume, the *War of Troy* is the longest and most detailed narrative about the Trojan War in the Greek tradition. However, motifs, scenes and even language from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are integrated throughout the Palaiologan romances. Such echoes can be found also beyond the Troy romances, for instance in *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*. Though the author sets his work in a fantastical location, which, though unspecified, is surely neither Trojan nor even archaic, the dénouement of the romance hinges on a decidedly

[57] It is not entirely clear whether Manasses was the common source for both romances (see Smith 1991–2: 82, n. 33), but both texts seem to independently have drawn on Manasses's chronicle. In the *Tale of Troy* also other motifs seem to stem from the *Synopsis Chronike*; see Nørgaard and Smith 1975, 9–10; Hesseling 1919: 141 on the catalogue of ships; cf. Moennig 1998. On the relation of the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy* to Manasses's chronicle and other sources, such as the *Allegories of the Iliad* by Tzeztes, see now also Lavagnini 2016. Worth noting is also the use of Manasses by the translator of the *War of Troy* (see Jeffreys 1978: 126–9) and Hermoniakos for his metaphrasis (see above, n. 51). See also Goldwyn 2015: 39–45.

[58] See Nilsson 2004 and 2006.

[59] Constantine Manasses, *Synopsis Chronike* 1152–4 (Lampsidis); cf. *Tale of Achilles* 1–20 (Smith).

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Homeric situation. When returning to Ithaka in Book XIV of the *Odyssey*, the first-person Odysseus meets his former swineherd Eumaeus. A mournful Eumaeus explains to Odysseus that the land has fallen on hard times because of a woman wooed and almost forced into marriage against her will. In order to do some reconnaissance, Odysseus dresses himself like a beggar in order to infiltrate the palace. He then has several meetings with his wife in which he knows her identity, but does not reveal his own until the climactic moment, when, ultimately, the romantic situation is righted and husband and wife reunited.

A similar sequence of events concludes *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*. Kallimachos's beloved Chrysorrhoe is taken to a faraway land and forced to wed the king of that land against her will. To find her, Kallimachos, a wanderer like Odysseus

> καὶ μετὰ πόνων καὶ κλαθμῶν δεινῶν καὶ βαρυτάτων,
> ὅσους εἰπεῖν οὐδ' ἀριθμὸς δύναται νὰ μετρήσῃ,
> κάμπους, βουνά, κλεισούρας τε καὶ ποταμοὺς καὶ βράχη.
> Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἤξευρε ποσῶς τὸν τόπον καὶ νὰ δράμῃ
> καὶ νὰ πληρώσῃ τὴν ὁδόν, ναὔρῃ τὸ θέλημάν του,
> ἀλλ' οὕτως, ἀνεπίγνωτα καὶ χώρις ἑρμηνείας
> ἐπεριπάτειν, ἔτρεχεν, ἐγύρευεν τὸν τόπον.

with sorrow, with terrible and deep laments which are beyond the power of number to count, he went over plains, mountains, defiles, rivers and rocky places. He did not know what country to enter or what road to take in order to find what he wanted. But as he was, at random and without guide, he wandered about.[60]

Eventually, 'he came upon a man ploughing his land with his yoke of oxen' (ἄνθρωπον εὗρε κάμνοντα τὴν γῆν μὲ τὸ ζευγάριν) and Kallimachos was comforted by this 'unhappy and afflicted man with whom he could share his grief and talk' (ἄνθρωπον . . . θλιμμένον, πονεμένον | καὶ συμπενθήσειν, μετ' αὐτοῦ κοινώσεται τοὺς λόγους).[61]

This passage echoes Odysseus's meeting with Eumaeus. Like the cowherd in *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, Eumaeus tends livestock, in this case pigs, and as Kallimachos and the ploughman find consolation in talking to one another, so does Eumaeus tell Odysseus:

> νῶϊ δ' . . .
> κήδεσιν ἀλλήλων τερπώμεθα λευγαλέοισι
> μνωομένω· μετὰ γάρ τε καὶ ἄλγεσι τέρπεται ἀνήρ,
> ὅς τις δὴ μάλα πολλὰ πάθῃ καὶ πόλλ' ἐπαληθῇ

[60] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1475–81 (Pichard); trans. Betts 1995: 66.
[61] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1486 and 1492–3 (Pichard); trans. Betts 1995: 66.

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> We two . . . shall entertain each other remembering and retelling
> our sad sorrows. For afterwards a man who has suffered
> much and wandered much has pleasure out of his sorrows.[62]

In both instances, the keeper of the livestock and the disguised hero take comfort in sharing with one another their respective sorrows. But, as in the *Odyssey*, Kallimachos must go to the castle, where he, like Odysseus, disguises himself as a beggar. Chrysorrhoe's words upon hearing of the beggar's arrival, echo Penelope's in the same situation; Chrysorrhoe says: 'Summon him. I want to learn of [his] country' (κράξε τον νὰ μάθωμεν τὴν χώραν).[63] Penelope says: 'Summon the stranger into my presence' (ἔρχεό μοι, τὸν ξεῖνον ἐναντίον ὧδε κάλεσσον).[64]

Indeed, even Penelope's scheme with the weaving of Laertes's burial shroud is reimagined to suit this new context. After they recognize one another, and in order to spend more time with Kallimachos, Chrysorrhoe orders that a pavilion with a cloth screen wrapped around it be built. In this way, she is able to avoid spending time with the king or anyone else, until her scheme is revealed to the king by an unfaithful servant girl. Indeed, the Funereal mood that reigns in Ithaka before the reunion of Odysseus and Penelope is manifested in *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* in Chrysorrhoe's order, when held by the king, that everyone shave their head and wear black. In both works, then, the wandering hero returns from war after a long absence to find his wife wooed against her will. Disguised as a beggar, and relying on the help of commoners, he is able to reveal himself to his wife and win her back.

While the Homeric echoes of *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* occur at the level of plot, those in the extant 307 lines of the fragmentary *Old Knight*, composed most likely between 1425 and 1450, uses Homeric language and style to domesticate these imported heroes into an indigenous heroic idiom.[65] A translation of Rusticiano da Pisa's *Gyrons li Courtois*, the *Old Knight*, nevertheless incorporates a Homeric style absent from the source text. The Homeric simile – and lion similes in particular – that compare warriors to wild animals or other natural phenomena occurs in several places, including when the Old Knight single-handedly defeats an enemy army:

> Πάντες λιπόντες ἔφευγον τοῦ χώρου τραυματίαι.
> Οἱ πλεῖστοι δ'ἔργον γίνονται μαχαίρας τοῦ πρεσβύτου.
> Αὐτὸς δ'ὁ σκύμνος στρέφεται τῇ μάνδρᾳ πολιχνίου.

[62] *Od.* 15.398–401; trans. Lattimore 1967.
[63] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1850 (Pichard); trans. Betts 1995: 73.
[64] *Od.* 17.544; trans. Lattimore 1967.
[65] For a summary of recent scholarship on both the date and place of composition, see Goldwyn 2012: 77, n. 3.

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All those remaining fled wounded from the field. | Most of them fell victim to the old man's sword. | The lion cub himself made for the shelter of the citadel.[66]

Another Homeric feature is the introduction of narratorial interjections of rhetorical questions at the moment of a hero's *aristeia*.[67] The poet-translator of the *Old Knight* adopts this same strategy, asking as the Old Knight goes into battle: 'And is it necessary for me to tell you and describe the many men | who struck the chest of the old man with spears?' (Καὶ δεῖ με λέγειν τὰ πολλὰ καὶ'παριθμεῖν τοὺς ἄνδρας | τοὺς βάλλοντας τὰ δόρατα τοῖς στέρνοις τοῦ πρεβύτου;).[68] Finally, the poet-translator of the *Old Knight* frequently uses the Homeric noun–epithet formula when referring to his heroes, as can be heard in such phrases as the 'nobleman Tristan', which appears four times (lines 58, 68, 118, 165), 'famous Lancelot' (lines 74, 93, 165), which appears three times, and any of the several uses of the epithet 'steadfast' (lines 67, 76, 88, 102, 122, 224, 238), used seven times to describe various heroes. Though none of these specific adjectives appears in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, this formulaic repetition of noun–epithets is a recognizably Homeric trait.[69]

Though the subject matter of the *Old Knight* is not Homeric – indeed, it is drawn from the Western European tradition of Arthurian romance – the poet-translator opted not to employ the strategy of, for instance, the poet-translator of *The War of Troy*, who opted to retain Old French style and aesthetics. Rather, his translation of this Arthurian story suggests a familiarity with central elements of Homeric style – the simile, narratorial rhetorical questions, noun–epithet formulas – and the importance of registering foreign heroes in a familiar heroic idiom. In this, his model of reception is almost the opposite of the poet-translator of *The War of Troy*, who used a foreign aesthetic to translate a familiar story. Ole Smith, the editor of both the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy*, has argued that these two works represent a 'separate distinctive genre', a 'crossing of Homeric tradition and Byzantine romance that has little to do, as far as we can see, with the late antique romances'.[70] This generic blurring is a fundamental commitment of the compositional practices of both writers of so-called original and so-called adaptation romances, among which the

[66] *Old Knight* 288–90 (Breillat); trans. Goldwyn 2012.
[67] See, for instance, *Il.* 5.703, 11.299 and 16.692.
[68] *Old Knight* 71–2 (Breillat); trans. Goldwyn 2012.
[69] Goldwyn 2012: 83.
[70] Smith 1991–2: 82; cf. Agapitos 2004 with the various responses. Cf. also Smith 1991–2: 87–9 on links to the Komnenian novels.

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Tale of Troy and the *Tale of Achilles* can be classed among the former and the *War of Troy* among the latter.

A mosaic of genres, each of these works blend not just Homeric and romance elements, but also elements drawn from chronicles, ekphrastic literature, hagiography, laments, earlier Greek romance traditions (the ancient and Komnenian novels) and contemporary western ones, and the oral folk tradition, among others. In a period of great literary experimentation, the seeming fixed division between the vernacular and learned traditions are perhaps not, in fact, as distinct as Smith and others have suggested, and the Trojan War romances, drawing as they do on ancient literature, represent a significant link between them.[71] In the romance, moreover, as a genre that exemplified the possibilities of such experimentation, authors returned in different ways to Homeric aesthetics and plot motifs, thus demonstrating Genette's concept of literature as 'palimpsestuous' – containing layer after layer of textual relations pointing in different directions and offering new meanings to keep the stories alive and sexy for new generations of readers.[72]

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[71] For a similar indication, see Chapter 10 in the present volume.
[72] Genette 1997. Genette's study is of particular relevance here, since he used the Homeric tradition to prove his point, tracing it all the way up to the twentieth century.

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CHAPTER 10

Herodotean Material in a Late Version of the Alexander Romance

Corinne Jouanno

The *Alexander Romance*, a fictional biography of Alexander the Great, falsely attributed to Alexander's official historian Callisthenes, is an anonymous work, combining echoes of the historical tradition and invented episodes of a very imaginative kind. It was composed at some time between the end of the Hellenistic period and the third century CE.[1] This fanciful version of Alexander's adventures encountered great success, and was translated into Latin and Armenian as early as in the fourth and fifth centuries – the first step towards an international career that extended as far as Malaysia. In the Greek-speaking world, too, Alexander's Pseudo-Callisthenian biography was extremely popular: during the Byzantine millennium, seven successive rewritings of the *Romance* were produced (recensions **β**, **λ**, **ε** and **γ**, Poem of the *Marcianus gr.* 408, recension **ζ**, *Rimada*), some of which even include 'sub-recensions', due to intensive reworking and interpolating. Here we shall look at the so-called **ζ** recension, a late rewriting of the *Alexander romance*. It offers a striking example of the complicated textual history that is a main characteristic of this popular work, which David Konstan refers to as an 'open text'.[2] The surviving vernacular Greek copies of the **ζ** recension are, in fact, the result of bilateral cultural exchange between the Greek and the Slavonic world. To sum up the results of Ulrich Moennig's thorough investigation of the matter: the extant Greek text is a translation of a Serbian text, which was itself a translation of a now lost Greek original. It was probably

[1] The date of its emergence has been much discussed, and is difficult to determine with any certainty, for the work, in its present form, is composed of heterogeneous material, some pieces of which (for instance, the novella presenting Alexander as pharaoh Nectanebo's son, Alexander's letter to Aristotle on the marvels of the East, the account of his death by poisoning, or his Last Will) go back to the very beginning of the Ptolemaic period and must have been circulating independently before being put together to form the text we call the *Alexander Romance*: see Stoneman's review of the various arguments in Stoneman and Gargiulo 2007: xxv–xxxiv.

[2] Konstan 1998.

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composed under the reign of the Palaiologan emperors, for it shows traces of the influence of contemporaneous 'chivalric' romances.[3] Although the surviving Greek retroversion may be post-Byzantine (it was completed at some point in the fifteenth century, before or after the Fall of Constantinople), the core of the work is of Palaiologan origin, and seems to have been transmitted rather faithfully.

Towards the end of the **ζ** recension, there is a curious episode unknown from the other versions of the *Alexander Romance*. It was probably invented by the author of the lost original work, for it exists both in the surviving Greek text and its Slavonic source. It shows Alexander inspecting his troops when he is suddenly seized by a melancholy crisis while contemplating how short-lived his soldiers are.[4] This episode is, in fact, a rewriting of a Herodotean anecdote which involved the Persian king Xerxes when he was about to invade Greece. The present chapter will offer a comparative analysis of the ancient Greek text and its Byzantine adaptation, followed by a survey of the Byzantine reception of the Xerxes episode, considering the ways of transmission of classical Herodotean material into Byzantine 'popular' culture.

Constructing the Image of a Byzantine Christian King through the Appropriation of a Herodotean Anecdote on Xerxes

In Herodotos's *Histories*, the episode is set in Abydos, immediately before Xerxes's crossing of the Hellespont (7.64). It is the first in a series of three reviews of the Persian army, the second of which occurs immediately after the landing in Europe (7.56) and the third in the Thracian city of Doriskos, after the cataloguing of the troops (7.100). Pierre Briant has underlined the ideological meaning of these episodes, where the review of the troops is in fact a review of the Empire itself and a display of the Great King's political and military power.[5] However, in Abydos Xerxes's first reaction of joy – which is the normal, expected attitude of an Achaemenid sovereign – is soon followed by a burst of tears, according to the king himself a result of his sudden apprehension of the frailty of life.

[3] Moennig 1992.

[4] *Alexander Romance* **ζ** 120.3–4 (Lolos and Konstantinopoulos), synoptic edition of the manuscripts F and E.

[5] Briant 1996: 209–11 and 542–3. Xerxes also appears as a spectator of his own army in several battle scenes (7.212; 8.88; 8.90). On the prominence of the 'visual theme' in the *Histories*, cf. Rogkotis 2006: 79–80. Konstan 1987: 73 interprets Xerxes's pleasure in reviewing his troops as an indication of his 'objectified, quantified relation' to the world.

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This second reaction, which is no longer in line with Achaemenid ideology, mirrors a feeling often expressed in the *Histories*, by Herodotos himself or by characters serving as his spokesmen – for instance Solon in Book 1.32.[6] One could certainly consider Xerxes's metaphysical anxieties as a kind of narratological prolepsis, foreshadowing the disastrous ending of the expedition against Greece,[7] but they are not very consistent with the Herodotean picture of the Great King as a tyrannical, hubristic figure, characterized by his impiety, foolish arrogance and outrageousness.[8] However, the unexpected appearance of a more sympathetic side of the Persian king is quite ephemeral,[9] for the passage under consideration is only the first part of a nine-chapter sequence (7.44–52). In the following lines Xerxes soon returns to a more confident view of things (7.47), while his interlocutor Artabanos, who plays the part of a wise adviser,[10] expresses his fears about the coming war and insists upon the serious disadvantages that Xerxes's oversized army will have in terms of military strategy and food supplies. But Xerxes refuses to take Artabanos's prudent warning into consideration: the bragging, hubristic king is back.[11]

[6] 'Human fragility figures prominently in the *Histories*', as remarked by Grethlein 2009, 203. See e.g. 1.5.4 (authorial statement); 1.32 (Solon); 1.207.2 (Croesus); 3.40.2 (Amasis). Xerxes's tears underline his 'momentary recognition of Solon and Herodotus' cycle of fortune' (Lateiner 1987: 94–5). On the Solonian overtones of this episode, see also Harrison 2000, 47–52.

[7] One can add this premonitory fit of pessimism to the series of ominous signs that mark the launching of Xerxes's expedition: dream (7.19); solar eclipse (7.37.2–3); thunder and lightning coming from Mount Ida (7.42.2); panic of the army (7.43.2); storm destroying the first bridge over the Hellespont (7.34–5); monstrous births (7.57.1–2). On this succession of bad omens, see Harrison 2000: 81, 98–9, 136; Hollmann 2011: 66–7, 72–4, 84. Xerxes's saying about the brevity of life also foreshadows the prophetic remarks uttered by an anonymous Persian convive, at Attaginus's banquet, concerning the imminent destruction of the Great King's army (9.16: 'Of all these men in a little time you will see only a few left alive').

[8] In the war council related in Book vii.8–11, Xerxes appears as a braggart and reckless king. On his outrageousness, see 7.22–4 (digging of a channel through Mount Athos); 7.35 (scourging of the Hellespont).

[9] On the complexity of the Herodotean Xerxes, described as a figure susceptible to vacillation, cf. Bridges 2015, 4, 45, 63–8.

[10] On Artabanos as a wise adviser, see Lattimore 1939: 24 and 26; Immerwahr 1954: 37–9 calls him a 'synthesis of Solon and Amasis'. During the war council episode, Artabanos uses very striking terms to warn Xerxes against divine jealousy (7.10): cf. Mikalson 2003: 39–40, 81–2, 151–2 and 160–1. He 'points out that the really bad thing is not human mortality but the changeability of life'; the scene thus highlights 'the limits of Xerxes' understanding of the *condicio humana*' (Grethlein 2009: 211).

[11] According to Zali 2014: 91–2, Herodotus emphasizes Xerxes's 'tendency to emotional extremes'. Some scholars appreciate the Persian king's attitude in a more positive way: according to Immerwahr 1954: 26 and 41–4, Xerxes's answer to Artabanos is an 'eloquent defense of action' and the king's blindness an 'inevitable' part of his acceptance of his conquering mission; Baragwanath 2008: 266–9 opposes Xerxes's 'Persian perspective' to Artabanos's 'Greek philosophy'.

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Things are rather different in the ζ recension, where the review episode is unique, and Alexander's tears are not preceded by demonstrations of joy and self-satisfaction. The story has been inserted towards the end of Alexander's life. After travelling to the margins of the world (72–86), subduing India (87–103), pacifying the Amazons (104–6), enclosing Gog and Magog behind iron gates (105), and visiting the fabulous kingdom of queen Kandake (106–18), Alexander is coming back to Babylon and has already planned his succession and the sharing of his kingdom between his closest friends. The Prophet Jeremiah then appears to inform him of his impending death (120). Alexander is upset by the announcement (he cries and laments), even though Aristotle tries to comfort him by evoking the resurrection to come at the end of times. It is in this context of emotional distress that the Herodotean review episode is placed.

The first lines of the passage describe Alexander in a fairly depressed mood: he is continuously 'thinking about his own death' and is 'sad day and night' (τὸν θάνατον τὸν ἐδικόν του ἐθυμᾶτον καὶ ὅλον ἦτον θλιμμένος νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμερός). Consequently, the idea of a review of the army does not come, as in Herodotos, from the king himself, but from his friends (his μεγιστάνοι) anxious to cure his 'bitterness' (πικρία) and turn his heart back to joy. Like Herodotos, the Byzantine rewriter insists on the huge size of Alexander's army and its multi-ethnic quality: here too, the view of the troops is conceived as a display of power, meant to remind Alexander of his identity as *kosmokrator*. We even find in the medieval text the Herodotean particular of an elevated place of observation. But here the experience is a complete failure: when seeing all the soldiers gathered in front of him, Alexander weeps, for he thinks of their inescapable death, to happen not in one hundred years, as Xerxes said, but in only fifteen. The chapter ends with these pessimistic considerations: for Alexander, there is no return to a more cheerful mood.

The Byzantine episode thus proves to be endowed with a much greater psychological coherence than its Herodotean model. Moreover, it matches perfectly the theme of the *memento mori*, which plays a significant role in the ζ recension.[12] In this late version of the *Alexander Romance*, Alexander's first words as he comes into the world (for he is a speaking baby) are to announce that he will come back to his 'mother earth' before forty years have passed (11.5). And, even before Jeremiah's apparition, he is

[12] On the importance of *memento mori* in Byzantine fictional works such as *Digenis Akritis*, the *Tale of Achilles* or Meliteniotes's allegorical poem *To Chastity*, see Cupane 2013: 70.

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repeatedly reminded of his impending death: the Gymnosophists tell him he is doomed to perish immediately after completing his conquests (80.8), and he also discovers in a church at Heliopolis an inscription foretelling his premature end (85.3). The author dramatizes Alexander's reaction to this insistent *memento mori*: thus we are informed that he spent six months without laughing at all after reading the Heliopolis inscription (87.1). One could be tempted to judge such an apprehension of death to be at odds with the image the **ζ** redactor attempts to construct of Alexander as an ideal Christian king, servant of the True God and instrument of the divine will.[13] But we must remember that *meditatio mortis* was considered by Byzantine theologians to be a step towards salvation.[14] John Climacus in his *Ladder of Divine Ascent* ranks the 'memory of death' (μνήμη θανάτου) among the most important virtues (it is the sixth step of the ladder), and he even states such a thought is a 'gift of God'.[15] Μνήμη θανάτου was deemed a privileged path to *katanyxis*, compunction, a humble state of mind highly valued in Byzantine Christianity.[16]

As a matter of fact, Alexander, when contemplating his troops, evolves from an anxiety about his own, individual death, to a more altruistic feeling of compassion for the precariousness of all human beings. The Christian intention that guided the **ζ** redactor in rewriting the Herodotean episode is clearly indicated by the new location of the review: for it takes place in the Ausitide country where Job the Just used to live.[17] Alexander's tears are thus placed under the patronage of the prestigious figure of the Suffering Just and they foreshadow his adoption of a sapiential *persona* in the agony episode, where he quotes a 'maxim' (παραβολή) inspired by the Old Testament Book of Proverbs: 'There does not exist any joy which is not mixed with affliction' (Οὐδὲν ἔναι χαρά, ἐὰν οὐδὲν σμικτῆ μὲ θλῖψιν).[18]

[13] Cf. Moennig 1992: 113–23; Jouanno 2014: 1253–62 and 1265–7.

[14] Cf. Hausherr 1944: 76–7 (Apophthegms of the Fathers), 137 (saying of Gregory Nazianzenus about tears as a 'fifth baptism' in *Or.* 39.17 [*In sancta lumina*]); Nagy 2000, 51, 96, 247.

[15] John Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, ch. 6 ('On the memory of death'), ch. 6 ('thinking on death', ἡ τοῦ θανάτου ἔννοια, is the most necessary of all activities); ch. 22 (it is a 'gift of God', δῶρον Θεοῦ); conclusion: 'Remember your end (τὰ ἔσχατά σου), and you will never sin' (truncated, and somewhat deformed, allusion to *Siracide*, 7.36, whose author was alluding to the end of *logoi*). On the importance of *meditatio mortis* as a way towards salvation, see also the apophthegms attributed to Antony (no. 33), Evagrius (nos. 1 and 4), Theophilus (nos. 4 and 5), John Colobos (no. 34), Cronios (no. 3), Rufus (no. 1) or Sarra (no. 6) in the *Sentences des Pères du désert* ('Collection alphabétique', ed. Regnault).

[16] Hinterberger 2006: 33–38.

[17] Cf. Job (Septuaginta) 1.1. The name of the place is altered in the two main manuscripts of **ζ** (ms **F** reads 'Aspitido', ms **E** 'Osphetida').

[18] *Alexander Romance* **ζ** 127.3 (Lolos and Konstantinopoulos). Cf. *Proverbs* 14.13: 'Even in laughter the heart may grieve, and mirth may end in sorrow'.

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In his new guise as a Christian king lamenting over the sadness of the human condition, the hero of the ζ recension is very similar to the mourning *basileus* described in an oft-quoted text of the Arabian author Harun ibn Yayah (ninth c.).[19] The scene takes place at the Ash procession, with the emperor looking at the dust contained in his *akakia* (a sort of roll) and shedding tears whenever the priest tells him: Μέμνησθε τοῦ θανάτου ('Remember death'). In a somewhat provocative article, Gilbert Dagron calls this striking description an 'interesting Arabian phantasm about the Byzantine empire', for in reality, he argues, the rhetoric of *memento mori* never infringed upon the field of ceremonial.[20] In our late Byzantine version of the *Alexander romance* it seems this phantasm has become embodied in the figure of Alexander.[21] The author of the ζ recension thus turns out to have made a rather skilful use of his Herodotean material.

Transmitting the Anecdote of Xerxes's Tears from Herodotos to Late Byzantium

Let us consider now the puzzling question of how the Xerxes episode may have come to the knowledge of our Byzantine writer, whether he borrowed the anecdote directly from Herodotos's *Histories*, or we rather have to do with a case of indirect transmission. Herodotos's work was undeniably familiar to Byzantine learned readers, and we possess interesting testimonies of the philological interest aroused by the historian's text, both in the Komnenian and in the Palaiologan times – two periods when the Asian campaigns of the Komnenian emperors on the one hand and the more and more pressing Turkish peril on the other can explain an increased curiosity about the historian of the great clash between Greece and Asia.[22] We know that several manuscripts of Herodotos were copied, restored or annotated in the fourteenth century, notably in Demetrios

[19] Vasiliev 1932: 159.

[20] Dagron 2012: esp. 521–2 and 524. Grünbart 2008: 91 confirms that there is no mention of tears shed publicly by the *basileus* in the *Book of Ceremonies*.

[21] In the *Phyllada*, a Neo-Hellenic rewriting of the ζ recension, where the Christian tonality of the story has been considerably lessened, Alexander no longer makes pronouncement on the frailty of life in the review episode (*Alexander Romance*, *Phyllada* 201 [Veloudis]); on the contrary, he finds some comfort in the viewing of his military forces: 'Alexander cheered up a little as a result of the army's games, and later on he returned and entered Babylon' (trans. Stoneman).

[22] In an article about *exempla* drawn from ancient Greek history in Byzantine literature, de Vries-van der Velden 2001: 437, points out that the interest of the Byzantines in the history of the classical times and the Persian wars increased under the influence of the 1204 disaster. For the assimilation of the Seldjuk sultan with a 'new Xerxes' in Komnenian panegyric literature, cf. Kaldellis 2007: 285. The anachronistic reference in John Kameniates's account of the siege of Thessaloniki (8.4) to city

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Triklinios's circle at Thessalonike, and in the Morea, a very active cultural centre at the time.[23] Erudite notes by John Tzetzes, transcribed by a scholar of the Palaiologan period, feature in the margins of the tenth-century *Laurentianus* 70.3,[24] and the *Vaticanus gr.* 123, copied around 1345, also includes a series of marginal glosses which must go back to the second part of the twelfth century and bear witness to a vivid interest in Herodotos and his scholarly reception as well.[25]

Consequently, when we find references to the episode of Xerxes's tears and his subsequent discussion with Artabanos in Eustathios of Thessaloniki's commentary on the *Iliad*,[26] in John Tzetzes's *Letters* and *Chiliades*,[27] or in Nikephoros Gregoras's *Roman History*,[28] it is highly probable that we are dealing with authors with a first-hand knowledge of Herodotos. As for the author of the ζ recension, if he was able to read the *Histories*, in spite of the difficulties inherent in the use of Ionian dialect,

walls built by a Roman emperor in order to resist Xerxes's march against Greece shows the Persian king was perceived as the archetypal enemy of the Byzantine Empire: cf. Messis 2006: 127.

[23] On the manuscript tradition of Herodotos, see Hemmerdinger 1981, who cites about ten manuscripts copied in the fourteenth century: *Laur.* 70.6, *Laur.* 70.29, *Vat. gr.* 123, *Pal. gr.* 152, *Ambros.* **L** 115 sup., *Marc. gr.* 366, *Par. gr.* 1633, *Par. gr.* 1634, *Cantabr. Univ. Libr.* Nn II 34, *Vind. Hist. gr.* 85. The story of the codex *Laur.* 70.6 offers an interesting picture of the circulation of Herodotos in Palaiologan times: this codex was copied in 1318, probably in Thessaloniki, by Nikolas Triklines, a collaborator (and relative?) of Demetrios Triklinius, who also used it to restore the codex *Angelicanus gr.* 83 (tenth c.), annotated by Nikephoros Gregoras (cf. Bianconi 2005: 38–41, 117, 130–1, 135, 181). Afterwards the *Laurentianus* was brought to Peloponnesus: the codex *Par. gr.* 1634 was copied on it, in 1372, at Astros by the priest Constantine, chartophylax of Pissa (cf. Zakythinos 1975: 317). It came into Pletho's possession, and was still at Mistra in 1436, when Bessarion drew a copy of it (*Marc. gr.* 365); then it was given to Chalkokondyles, who brought it with him when he left Mistra (cf. Kaldellis 2014: 45–8 and 259–62). See also n. 48 in Chapter 10 in the present volume.

[24] Cf. Luzzato 1998: 71–6.

[25] Mazzuchi 2002. One of these glosses on Herodotus concerns Xerxes's tears (7.45), it wrongly explains as a result of the excess of joy: 'Observe that after congratulating himself, he shed tears because of his immoderate joy, I suppose, as it usually happens' (f. 304r).

[26] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Commentary on the* Iliad, *ad Il.* 9.496 (van der Valk): allusion to Hdt. 7.47.1. On the heavy presence of Herodotus in Eustathios's commentaries, see Sakellaridou-Soteroudi 1993 and Cantore 2002. Herodotos also features among the favourite sources exploited by Eustathios in his panegyric orations: cf. Stone 1999, 356. Cantore 2002 underlines Eustathios's direct knowledge of the historian's text, though she points out the presence of a certain amount of quotations that probably come from lexica, grammatical handbooks or compilations such as those of Athenaeus or Stephanus Byzantinus.

[27] Tzetzes, *Epistles* 85 (Leone); Tzetzes, *Chiliades* (Leone) 1.32: ('Xerxes'), 939–51 and 12.415 ('How Xerxes rejoiced at his countless troops and at once his eyes were full of tears'): this second chapter amounts to nothing else but a cross-reference to chapter 1.32.

[28] Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History* 20.7 (Schopen): Gregoras ironically compares Cantacuzenes's and Palamas's troops, supposedly composed of immortal beings, with Xerxes's huge but ephemeral army; the latter's inferiority could seem proven by the attitude of the king himself, 'now laughing, now weeping'.

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we must assume he was endowed with a higher level of instruction than suggested by the vernacular form of the extant Greek text. The fact that the Serbian source of the Greek retroversion was, according to Moennig, written in *Hochsprache* makes such a supposition plausible.[29] Otherwise he could have had access to the Herodotean anecdote through the medium of a work belonging to 'instrumental literature' (*Gebrauchsliteratur*), more easily accessible to readers with an elementary level of instruction. A short investigation will therefore be useful so as to appraise how widely the story of Xerxes's tears was disseminated from antiquity onwards.

The reception of the Herodotean episode in the ancient Roman world, from the first to the fourth century CE, indicates that it must have soon become part of one (or several) collection(s) of anecdotes which served as repositories of rhetorical ornaments and edifying exempla.[30] Valerius Maximus reports Xerxes's review at Abydos in a chapter of his *Memorable Words and Deeds* devoted to 'The Greed of Life' (9.123, *De cupiditate vitae*, ext. 1), and Seneca mentions the Persian king's tears in his treatise *On the shortness of life* (*De brevitate vitae*, 17.2) as an illustration of the misery of those men who 'forget the past, neglect the present and fear for the future' (16.1). It seems that the episode was considered mostly appropriate to the composition of consolatory letters:[31] Pliny the Younger makes use of it in a letter to his friend Caninius Rufus on the death of Silius Italicus (3.7.13), and so does Saint Jerome in a letter of consolation addressed in 396 to the bishop Heliodorus, a friend of his, at the death of his nephew Nepotianus (*Ep*. 60).[32]

In the Greek world, evidence attesting to the popularity of the episode are paradoxically fewer: Diodoros does not mention the Abydos review in the chapters of his *Library of History* dealing with Xerxes's expedition against Greece,[33] and Plutarch does not reproduce Xerxes's melancholy utterance in the section of his *Apophthegms of Kings and Generals* devoted to the Persian king; however, he apparently knew the

[29] Moennig 1992: 86.

[30] Two other stories concerning Xerxes, his digging a channel through Mount Athos and his bridging the Hellespont, were part of the corpus of standard anecdotes repeated again and again in Greek and Roman literature.

[31] Valerius Maximus depended directly or indirectly upon Greek collections similar to his own, according to Rosivach 1984: 8. On the 'purpose of moral guidance and consolation' that predominates in his chapters dealing with the theme of death, cf. Skidmore 1996: 77–9.

[32] On Jerome's debt towards Pliny the Younger, from whom he probably borrowed the Xerxes anecdote, cf. Trisoglio 1973: 351, 366–8.

[33] According to Jacoby 1913, col. 508, Diodoros's main source in Book XI was Ephoros, not Herodotos.

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passage fairly well, for he quotes Artabanos's sentence about divine jealousy (*phthonos*) in the essay *That Epicurus Actually Makes a Pleasant Life Impossible*.[34] Yet two Greek authors probably played a critical part in the Byzantine reception of this Herodotean anecdote, namely Hermogenes and Stobaeus, whose works were very popular in Byzantium, the first among *literati* and the second among a more heterogeneous audience. Hermogenes quotes Xerxes's discussion with Artabanos about the 'human condition' in his treatise *On Types of Style* as an example of Herodotos's gift for imitating various characters' *ethos* and *pathos* and as an illustration of his capacity for 'greatness'.[35] In Stobaeus's *Anthology*, the story of Xerxes's tears features in two different chapters of Book IV: a first, almost complete quotation of the episode is to be found in a chapter 'On life, that it is short and mean and full of worries'[36] (4.34.73), and a second, abridged version appears in a chapter devoted to a 'Comparison of life and death' (4.53.40).[37] In the second passage the introductory, narrative part of the anecdote has been suppressed, and the excerpt reproduces only the verbal exchange between Xerxes and Artabanos, whose names are not specified.[38] To be sure, the erasure of any onomastic data was likely to encourage the kind of literary recycling observed in the **ζ** recension.[39]

[34] *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum,* 30 (1106–7a): quotation from Hdt. 7.46. Alluding to the anecdote of Xerxes's tears in his *Funeral Oration for Procopius*, Choricios of Gaza also puts the main stress on Artabanos's answer, and not on the Xerxes's melancholy crisis (42).

[35] This rather brief but important allusion features in a passage of the treatise devoted to the 'plainly panegyric discourse', where Herodotos is praised as 'the most panegyric' of all Greek historians: 2.12, ll. 114–30 (Rabe). Hermogenes wrongly confuses Artabanos with the Persian officer Artabazes.

[36] Stobaeus suppressed the lines devoted to the organization of the regatta. In the same chapter of the *Anthology* (4.34) there is another short excerpt (61) reproducing only Artabanos's considerations about the miseries of life (Hdt. 7.46), that is the concluding lines of excerpt no. 73.

[37] Several other quotations from Herodotos appear twice in the *Anthology*: Hdt. 1.8 (Stob. 3.32.15; 4.23.36); 3.53 (Stob. 3.23.12; 4.8.28); 3.80 (Stob. 4.6.24; 8.29); 7.10 (Stob. 3.22.46; 42.16); 7.16 (Stob. 3.3.57; 10.40); 7.46 (Stob. 4.34.61; 53.40); 7.49 (Stob. 4.13.31; 34.64); 7.160 (Stob. 3.19.19; 20.44); 7.203 (Stob. 4.34.74a; 41.63). One can remark that Book VII of the *Histories* is well represented in this list of double quotations.

[38] On this peculiarity, due to a generalizing and functionalizing intention, see Piccione 2003–4: 247. The excerptor tends to suppress too individualistic details (for instance proper names) to lend his material a more general and sententious character (cf. Hense 1916: col. 1584; Mansfeld and Runia 1997: 208). Piccione 1994, 307 points out the presence in the Stobaean excerpts of a tendency to lexical or syntactical simplification; in Herodotos's quotations, some Ionian forms have been replaced by the corresponding Attic forms.

[39] Conversely, the presence of Xerxes's name could have discouraged any attempt of recycling, for Xerxes in the *Alexander Romance* is referred to as an *insolens barbarus*, consonant with the image developed in the rhetorical tradition, and serves as a foil to Alexander (Bridges 2015: 119–21 and 164–5).

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Stobaeus's *Anthology* was admittedly much appreciated in Byzantium,[40] and his work exerted an 'enormous influence on the subsequent history of Greek anthologizing',[41] but it is worth noting that Xerxes's story has not been reproduced in any of the most important gnomologies produced by Byzantine compilers: it does not feature in the *Corpus Parisinum*,[42] the fourth part of which is made of over two hundred Stobaean *excerpta*; it is missing from the *Loci communes* of Pseudo-Maximus, which could be called the 'bestseller' of all Byzantine gnomologies;[43] it does not appear in Georgides's collection, the sacro-profane florilegium which circulated most widely after the *Loci communes*,[44] nor in Pseudo-Antonius's *Melissa*, nor in the version of the *Melissa Augustana* edited by Étienne Sargologos. Moreover, Herodotos's presence is rather scarce in Byzantine gnomologies: whereas Stobaeus's *Anthology* included forty-eight Herodotean quotations, there are only five in the short version of the *Loci communes* (MaxI), six in the enlarged version (MaxII), three in the *Melissa Augustana*, a single one in the *Corpus Parisinum*, Georgides or Pseudo-Antonius.[45] In Constantine Porphyrogenitos's collection *De virtutibus*, Herodotos is better represented with sixty-one quotations, but once again Xerxes's tears and his discussion with Artabanos are not mentioned, though eleven of the Constantinian *excerpta* come from Book VII of the *Histories*, one of the books most extensively used by the excerptors.[46] The episode is missing as well from the *Souda* encyclopaedia, even if the work is extremely rich in references to Herodotos and the Xerxes entry alludes to the chronologically close anecdotes of the channel dug through Mount Athos and the scourging of the Hellespont. Nor do the Byzantine chronicles make the slightest allusion to the Abydos review. One must conclude from this quite negative survey that the story of Xerxes's tears did not rank among the Herodotean

[40] Books III and IV, with an ethical and political content, were far more popular and more often copied than Books I and II, mainly dealing with questions of physics and logics. In the conclusion of the chapter he devoted to the *Anthology*, Photios praises the utility of the work (*cod.* 167.115b).

[41] Searby 2007, vol. I, 56.

[42] On the importance of this collection, which served as a major source for sacro-profane florilegia such as the *Loci communes* of Ps.-Maximus, Ps.-Antonius's *Melissa*, or the *Melissa Augustana*, see Searby 1998: 56.

[43] The *Loci communes* have been preserved in more than one hundred manuscripts.

[44] Odorico 1986: 37–53 quotes nine manuscripts.

[45] MaxI and MaxII: Hdt. 1.87.4; 4.104; 7.16 (twice quoted); 7.39. An additional quotation features in MaxII: Hdt. 1.8.3 (according to Plutarch, *Conjugal Precepts*, 10.139c). *Melissa Augustana*: Hdt. 1.87.4; 4.104; 7.16. *Corpus Parisinum*: Hdt. 7.16. Georgides: Hdt. 5.4. Ps.-Antonius: Hdt. 7.16 (quoted anonymously). All these quotations (with the exception of Hdt. 5.4) ultimately derive from Stobaeus: Hdt. 1.8.3 = Stob. 3.32.15 and 4.23.36; Hdt. 1.87.4 = Stob. 4.14.10; Hdt. 4.104 = Stob. 4.2.28; Hdt. 7.16 = Stob. 3.3.57; Hdt. 7.39 = Stob. 3.20.45.

[46] Only Book III comes first, with sixteen quotations.

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anecdotes most often circulated in Byzantium independently from the *Histories*. We should therefore not rule out the possibility that the author of the **ζ** recension encountered the episode in reading the very text of Herodotos (or parts of it).[47]

The Enduring Influence of Herodotos on the Alexander Tradition

As a matter of fact, the melancholy episode is not the only passage in the ζ recension to which a Herodotean origin may be assigned.[48] The story of the siege and destruction of Athens (37–40), a fictitious rewriting of the historical episode of the siege of Thebes, is reminiscent of Xerxes's sack of Athens during the second Persian War, and the mention of the fire that destroyed the 'big and beautiful church the like of which nobody in the world had ever seen' (ἡ ἐκκλησία ἡ μεγάλη, ἡ ὡραία καὶ ὄμορφη, ὁποὺ ὁ κόσμος ὅλος τίτοιαν οὐδὲν εἶδαν)[49] could echo Herodotos's allusion to the Acropolis burnt to ashes by the Persians (8.53). Indeed a reference to the Persian Wars appears at the beginning of the *Alexander romance* episode, when the Athenian citizens debate whether to submit or to resist Alexander, and an advocate of war, called Antisthenes, reminds his fellow countrymen that the Persian king Ἔζαρκ (alias Xerxes) once campaigned against Athens with a huge army, but was unable to do any harm to the city (**F**, 37.6).[50] Later on, the story of the siege of Babylon, which Alexander manages to enter by digging trenches to divert the water of the Euphrates, while the inhabitants of the city are celebrating a night feast in honour of their god Apollo (55.16–56), derives from the Herodotean version of the capture of Babylon by Cyrus the Great, who made use of the same stratagem in 539 BCE to take over the city (1.189–91): even the particular of the festival is common to both texts.

[47] One might contemplate the possibility of a school-collection of selected passages. But it is usually assumed that only the three first books of the *Histories* were studied at school (cf. Bouffartigue 1992: 282–4). Among the around forty papyri of Herodotus copied between the first and the fifth centuries CE, Bandiera 1997 underlines the massive predominance of Book I, with nineteen fragments. Similarly, in the rhetorical handbooks of *progymnasmata* Books I and II of the *Histories* are the most often quoted according to Bompaire 1976.

[48] On Herodotean material in **ζ**, see Moennig 1992: 104–5, 108, 127, 131, 185, 187–8, 218.

[49] *Alexander Romance* **ζ** 40.5 (Lolos and Konstantinopoulos).

[50] Vanquished by the Athenians, the Persian king was forced to retire and most of his troops perished, drowned in a big river – a detail perhaps reminiscent of the Herodotean tempest episode near the Strymon river (8.118), unless it is a recollection of Aeschylus's *Persians*, where the Great King's soldiers perish engulfed by the melting of the same iced-over river (l.492–512). Xerxes's name is present only in ms **F**, not in ms **E**, whose text is lacunose.

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The three references in **ζ** to a certain 'Krises, king of Lentia', who is evidently an avatar of the Lydian Croesus, may also betray the influence of Herodotos. This 'Krises' is first mentioned in the episode of Alexander's visit to Darius's camp, where he is presented as a subject of the Persian king (63.2 and 4), that is, in the same role as his Herodotean counterpart, turned into a counsellor of Cyrus after the capture of Sardis.[51] The same 'Krises' appears a second time as an opponent of Alexander, before whom he refuses to bow: he is then betrayed by his own people and surrendered to Alexander, along with more gold 'than human eyes had ever seen' (ὁποὺ ποτὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὰ ὀμμάτια οὐκ εἶδαν)[52] – a detail obviously reminiscent of Croesus's fabulous wealth, which plays a great part in Herodotos's *Histories.*[53] The third allusion of the ζ recension to 'King Krises' features in chapter 122, in a series of sayings by Alexander: as someone advises him to count his possessions, Alexander objects that King Krises never derived any benefit from the wealth he accumulated (Ὁ Κρίσης ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς Λεντίας τίποτες καλὸν καὶ τιμὴν οὐδὲ ἐποίησεν τὸ χρυσάφιν, ὁποὺ εἶχεν μαζώμενον);[54] he thus speaks with the same voice as the Herodotean wise Solon, contemptuous of the Lydian king's riches (1.32). One more possible echo of Herodotos's *Histories* features in chapter 91, when Alexander chastises the Persians guilty of encouraging the Macedonians to betray him and humiliates them by forcing them to wear 'women's clothes' (γυναίκεια ροῦχα) and 'women's headscarves' (γυναίκεια μανδήλια) – that is exactly the fate imposed upon the Lydians by Cyrus the Great after the capture of Sardis, in accordance with the advice of Croesus himself, anxious to spare the complete destruction of his people.[55]

To be sure, such a list of Herodotean episodes cannot serve as definite proof of direct knowledge of the historian's text on the part of the author of the ζ recension, for at least some of this Herodotean material was circulating independently, exactly like the story of Xerxes's tears. As noted by Ulrich Moennig, Croesus was a well-known figure in the Byzantine world chronicles.[56] The story of Cyrus's capture of Babylon can be found both in John Zonaras's chronicle (3.24) and in Polyaenus's collection of

[51] Cf. Hdt. 1.85; 155–6; 207–8; 211.
[52] *Alexander Romance* ζ (F) 72.1 (Lolos and Konstantinopoulos): details partly missing in ms **E**, whose text is slightly shortened in this passage.
[53] See for instance Hdt. 1.30.
[54] *Alexander Romance* ζ (F) 122.5 (Lolos and Konstantinopoulos). Passage missing in ms **E**.
[55] Hdt. 1.154. [56] Moennig 1992: 225–6, 275–6.

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Stratagems (7.6.5 and 8),[57] that is, in works pertaining to instrumental literature, and the episode which in Polyaenus comes immediately before the capture of Babylon is actually the story of the Lydians forced to adopt women's garments as a punishment (7.6.4). As for the Persian sack of Athens, it must have been common knowledge in Byzantium, even among people with a rather elementary education.

The presence in the ζ recension of such a series of passages with a Herodotean background is nevertheless striking, and all the more so since all the episodes under consideration turn out to be episodes newly invented by the Palaiologan author, who thus appears in accordance with a heavy tendency of the whole Alexander tradition, marked from the very beginning by the influence of the historian of Halicarnassus.[58] This is an influence already noteworthy in the first historical reports written by Alexander's companions, especially in Nearchus's *Indian Periplus*,[59] and also discernible, though to various degrees, in the works of the five extant historians of Alexander, Greek and Latin, notably in Arrian (whose *Indica* were written in Ionian dialect) and Curtius.[60] The shadow of Herodotos is perhaps even more conspicuous in the fictional, Pseudo-Callisthenian branch of the Alexander tradition[61] than in the historical branch. One can cite as an example the story of young Alexander's encounter with the Persian ambassadors (1.18–19), for this episode, present in the oldest version of the *Romance*, the so-called α recension, is modelled upon a story, related by Herodotos, about Alexander I, son of the Macedonian king Amyntas (5.15–20). It is impossible here to review all the passages of the α recension with a Herodotean overtone – the Persian war council (2.7), the battle where the Persian arrows are numerous enough to veil the sunlight (2.9), the description of Darius's flight (2.16), and so on.[62]

[57] However, the detail of the night feast is missing from Polyaenus's rather short version of the episode.

[58] According to Bowersock 1989: 410 Herodotos's influence can be felt even on Alexander himself: 'The actions of Alexander', he maintains, 'leave us in no doubt that he knew his Herodotus intimately', and 'certain of his most important symbolic gestures point directly to Herodotean prototypes' (for instance, his sacrifice at the tomb of Protesilaus).

[59] Cf. Pearson 1960: 8–9, 12 (general considerations); 9, 30, 49 (Callisthenes); 57–8, 60 (Chares); 95 (Onesicritus); 112, 118, 123–6, 128, 130, 144, 147, 149 (Nearchus); 186 (Aristobulus); 197 (Ptolemy). Briant 2003: 278 points out that Xerxes's memory is omnipresent in the historical accounts of Alexander's landing in Asia and Trojan deeds.

[60] Cf. Pearson 1960: 2, 11, 112, 119 (Arrian); 10–11 (Plutarch); 241 (Diodorus). On Arrian and Herodotos, see also Stadter 1980, 10, 60–2, 74–5, 79, 130 (*Indica*), 166, 168, 199, 218–19, 223. On Curtius and Herodotos, Blänsdorf 1971. On Herodotos's influence on Plutarch's treatises *De Alexandri fortuna*, Briant 2003: 280–1.

[61] Merkelbach 1977: 24, Jouanno 2002: 31–2, 53–4, 89–90, 215, 291, 348.

[62] Cf. Hdt. 7.8–11 (Xerxes's war council); 7.226 (arrows veiling the sunlight). On the arrow motif, see Rosivach 1984: 335. On Darius' flight, Briant 2003, 335.

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Even the name of Kandaules, given to the son of queen Kandake, seems to have been borrowed from Herodotos's *Histories* (1.8–12). But the most remarkable thing is the enduring influence of Herodotos at every stage of the textual history of the *Alexander Romance*, and the fact that each successive redactor introduced new Herodotean motifs or anecdotes into the Pseudo-Callisthenian tradition. To mention but a few among many examples: the details given in the β recension about the Ten-Thousand battalion of the Great King (1.41) and the stratagem of the she-mares used by Alexander to escape the land of darkness (2.39–40) derive (directly or indirectly) from Herodotos's *Histories*,[63] as well as the name of Polykratos, tyrant of Thessalonike, in the ε recension (11.4–5), and perhaps also the story of the spies mislead by Alexander's false display of military force (17.7).[64]

Conclusion

The presence of this continuing substratum of Herodotean material in a popular work such as the *Alexander Romance* raises the important question of possible exchanges between classical and vernacular literature. Perhaps the boundaries between the two fields were more permeable than is often argued.[65] As for Herodotos, his literary fortunes may have been great enough to allow an appreciable amount of the narrative and anecdotal material of the *Histories* to become part of a sort Greek cultural koine, which was diffused at all levels of Byzantine culture, learned and vernacular alike. As a matter of fact, his influence was so widespread already in the Hellenistic period that it not only left its stamp on the whole historical and ethnographic tradition, but even affected the world view of the Hellenistic age, exerting a decisive role in the development of wonder-narrative and paradoxography,[66] to which the Alexander tradition, historical and fictional alike, is heavily indebted.

[63] Cf. Hdt. 7.83 (Ten-Thousands); 3.102–5 (stratagem with she-camels).

[64] Cf. Hdt. 3.39 (Polycratus); 7.147 (Xerxes and the Greek spies); the same anecdote features in Polyaenus's *Stratagems* (7.15.2).

[65] See the remark by Sevcenko 1974: 77–8 that 'authors of Byzantine popular works, too, must have come from a milieu not quite devoid of learning', and that we have to make 'less differentiation between the environments which produced the two types of literature – the popular and the learned – in Byzantium'.

[66] See Murray 1972, esp. 204–10; Hornblower 2006: 312–3; Priestley 2014, esp. 51–108 and 109–56.

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CHAPTER 11

The Palaiologan Hagiographies
Saints Without Romance

Charis Messis

Scholarly efforts to find elements of or influences from hagiographical narratives in the Palaiologan romance have not been convincing. Take the example of *Digenis Akritis*, which in its oldest extant version, the so-called Grottaferrata (**G**), is a creation of the Palaiologan period.[1] The 'hagiographical' elements of *Digenis Akritis* have been meticulously recorded,[2] but the majority remain on the level of rather distant analogies and parallels which are due to the moralizing tendency that the composer of version **G** imposed on his heroic–erotic material. All these elements are missing in the version of the poem preserved in the Escorial manuscript (**E**) dating to the fifteenth century, which offers a rewriting of the text in vernacular language. Indeed, Digenis of this heroic poem (just like Achilles of the homonymous Palaiologan romance) is an only child[3] and may thus resemble several saints. However, this resemblance does not indicate an influence of hagiography, but rather a thematic community based on a joint cultural and literary background that defines the hero in the Greco-Roman world.

Another recent attempt to discover in some Palaiologan romances the echoes of hagiographical tales – based on the motif of *katabasis* (the descent into the underworld), the vision of (or journey to) paradise, and the biographical arrangement of some romances – have also led to questionable results.[4] Journeys into another, imagined world shared by several

[1] The dating of *Digenis* and the circumstances of its composition remain an open question, in spite of an impressive and still growing bibliography. While the dating of the *Urtext* to the twelfth century is a conjecture, based on scattered references and the 'common sense' of modern scholars, the dating of the Grottaferrata version to the early fourteenth century is a textual reality that we need to take into serious consideration. On *Digenis* in general, see Beaton and Ricks 1993 and the edition of the two oldest versions: Jeffreys 1998.

[2] Trapp 1976, Kazhdan 1986 and Jouanno 1998: 156–67.

[3] Achilles, we may add, was conceived with difficulty and prayers; *Tale of Achilles* 10–15 (Smith).

[4] Moennig 2014; conclusions such as that 'The incorporation of motifs of *katabasis* into love romance is an act of remarkable secularisation, as are the striking resemblances between the personification of Eros and God' (169) are rather problematic.

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romances (*Livistros and Rhodamne*, *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*) and certain hagiographical texts (*Barlaam and Ioasaph*, *Life of Makarios the Roman*, numerous apocalypses)[5] do not constitute a sufficient proof of thematic interpenetration between hagiography and romance. The differences between romance and hagiography in their treatment of the same motif are much more significant than any similarities. Moreover, all the relevant motifs appear as literary devices prior to both hagiography and romance.

Such comparisons, based merely on motifs and narrative segments, rather than analysis of entire texts, are likely to fall into circular reasoning. The same elements that are used in order to demonstrate the influence of romance and fiction on hagiography are employed in order to demonstrate the contrary, the influence of hagiography on romance. *Barlaam and Ioasaph* and the *Life of Makarios* are thus often treated as hagiographical romances,[6] while the romances that are supposedly copying or repeating certain of their elements are treated as evidence of the influence of hagiography on the romance. But not even strongly moralizing compositions, such as Meliteniotes's poem *Verses on Chastity* indicate the introduction of religious discourse and monastic values into the world of romance; this poem is merely a parody, as much of erotic romance as it is of moral discourse.[7]

If novelistic narratives are characterized by a combination of genres, a certain hybridization of content and form is expected, or perhaps even obligatory. The romance encompasses various literary traditions in order to create its own voice. It is accordingly methodologically more risky to look for hagiographical elements in romance than the opposite: to seek romance elements inserted into the plots of more or less conventional hagiography.[8] In this chapter I shall therefore change focus and consider the relationship between hagiography and romance from the perspective of novelistic and romance influences on the hagiographical compositions of the Palaiologan period.[9] But first some clarifications are necessary, since the relationship between hagiography and romance is indeed even more complex during this period than one may anticipate.

First, romance takes a new form: we are no longer dealing with the Greek novel of late antiquity and its later versions in the twelfth century,

[5] On this group of texts, see Ainalis 2018. [6] For a discussion, see Messis 2014.
[7] On this text, see Cupane 1978, Beaton 1996: 192–5 and Schönauer 1996.
[8] On the diversity of hagiographical forms, see Hinterberger 2014a.
[9] On the hagiographical production in this period, see Laiou-Thomadakis 1980, Macrides 1981, Talbot 1991 and 2011, Hinterberger 2010 and Mergiali-Sahas 2014.

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but with romances inspired by various sources, both oriental and occidental, and composed in a more or less vernacular language and exclusively in verse. The romances are divided in two types: biographical tales based on classical themes (*War of Troy*, *Tale of Achilles*, *Tale of Troy*) and erotic narratives that follow a more conventional model (acquaintance–separation–reunion). All these Palaiologan texts create a new world without apparent links to the ancient Greek novel.

Second, hagiography develops in two distinct directions after the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204, but especially after the restoration of the empire in 1261. The anxiety to preserve the lost heritage sparks the rewriting of ancient material and forges the first pillar of Palaiologan hagiography: more or less faithful reproductions or free adaptations of earlier texts, which constitute the main part of hagiographical production. In this case, the relationship between romance and hagiography depends on the original text and the link is therefore not to contemporary romance but to the ancient or Komnenian novel; the interesting question is then to what extent the author or adaptor has 'novelized' or 'romanced' a story in relation to its original version.

The second pillar of Palaiologan hagiography consists of *Lives* of contemporary saints. The dire political situation of the empire with the aggression of both Turks and Westerners, along with the major internal problems that Byzantium faced, meant that the political and religious situation had an important influence on the character of hagiography, which became largely polemical and apologetic. The major part of this hagiographical production was written by followers of the Hesychastic movement and pertained to its seminal figures; the purpose of these writers was to respond to claims and accusations by the opponents of Hesychasm as well as promote the orthodoxy of their own religiosity. From this perspective, 'romancing' hagiography was not a stylistic or thematic priority.

These two major types of hagiographical writing adopt a highly learned language and make maximum use of rhetorical training. In addition, however, to this erudite and 'urban' hagiography – centred on Constantinople and Thessalonike, and participating in the fierce struggles at the centre of both state and Church – there exist two further hagiographical productions. The first one is, in essence, a subcategory of the hagiography concerning contemporary saints; its difference lies in that it is of monastic origin and, more importantly, is much less ambitious on both formal and doctrinal levels. It often takes the episodic form of late antique hagiographical collections and is written in a more or less vernacular

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language and style. The second production (on which more below) is rather distinct from all the above; it is more 'secular' than hagiographical, and consists of biographical narratives written in a highly encomiastic mode, thus entering the field of secular encomia and creating hybrid forms that can be placed with difficulty in relation to any single genre.

The Hagiographical Rewritings (Second Half of the Thirteenth to the First Half of the Fourteenth Century)

Upon the restoration of Byzantine power in Constantinople in 1261, but especially after the death of Michael VIII (1259–82) and probably as a reaction to his pro-unionist politics (Council of Lyon, 1274), there was a large-scale effort to write new hagiographical works, mainly eulogies, of saints of the past. This endeavour lasted until the fall of the Byzantine empire, but its golden age was the period from the last quarter of the thirteenth to the first half of the fourteenth century. Martyrs of late antiquity and saints of the middle Byzantine period are the major subjects of this reinvestment in the new organization of the cult of saints in the liberated cities. Authors such as Patriarch George/Gregory of Cyprus (1241–90),[10] Constantine Akropolites (d. before 1324),[11] Nikephoros Gregoras (1290–1360)[12] and Nikephoros Xanthopoulos (d. after 1328)[13] initiate this kind of production during the reign of Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282–1328) and dedicate themselves to it with zeal.

The primary feature of this production, in which Constantine Akropolites excels, is laudatory discourse that most often summarizes earlier hagiographical texts with no substantial changes in the content (except for sometimes reducing their size); its style, in the mode of Symeon Metaphrastes, is certainly learned but without Atticistic excesses. This latter feature, classicizing language, does concern the works written by prominent literati (George/Gregory of Cyprus, Nikephoros Gregoras, Nikephoros Xanthopoulos) with a rather literary goal: the text is not written to be delivered at the inauguration of a sanctuary, but as an exercise in style and virtuosity or as a piece to be presented before a pious aristocratic audience, primarily composed of women of the imperial

[10] On the hagiographical production of George/Gregory of Cyprus, see Kotzabassi 1998 and Larchet 2012.
[11] On Akropolites, see Nicol 1965; Talbot 2011: 177–8.
[12] On the hagiography of Nikephoros Gregoras, see Hinterberger 2004 and Paraskevopoulou 2013.
[13] On the hagiography of Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, see Efthymiadis 2006–7 and 2015.

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family. This could explain the considerable number of rewritings that concern women martyrs of late antiquity (Vassilisa – BHG 2059) or exemplary women of the middle Byzantine period (Thomaïs – BHG 2455; Theophano – BHG 1795; Euphrosyne the Younger – BHG 627). These texts often surpass the length of an encomium and acquire the dimensions of a *Life*. Since the presence of women – with their disguises, escapes, adventures outside the family unit, spectacular martyrdom and vigorous asceticism – offers the greatest possibility for a possible novelistic influence, it is to these works that we shall now turn. Our investigation shall focus on whether there is a move towards more or less 'novelisation'[14] in these Palaiologan products in relation to what may be observed in their hypotexts.

The case of the *Life of Thomaïs of Lesbos* and its rewritings in the Palaiologan period, and more precisely in the fourteenth century, has already been treated by Stephanos Efthymiadis.[15] His study shows that while Akropolites reproduces faithfully in his encomium dedicated to the saint (BHG 2457) the narrative fabric of the *Life* of the tenth century (BHG 2454), the author (convincingly identified as Nikephoros Xanthopoulos) of the *Life* from the same period – the one that concerns us here – reworks his material based on his advanced rhetorical training and his study of classical literature, following contemporary fashion. An avid reader of the *History* of Niketas Choniates, Xanthopoulos attributes to the saint the traits of a novelistic and tragic heroine, 'en proie à la haine, à l'envie et à la violence, incapable d'échapper au destin que son entourage a préparé pour elle',[16] and to her husband the characteristics, shared by Andronikos I Komnenos in the *History* of Choniates, of a villain and shameless malefactor as those found in the ancient and Komnenian novel.[17]

The second text to consider was composed also by Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, the long *Life of Euphrosyne the Younger*, who lived at the turn of the tenth century. This text brings up the question of female disguise and the escape from the family, known from the ancient and twelfth-century novel, in a fourteenth-century context. The *Life* of the tenth century has not been preserved, but we can restore its general lines by relying on Constantine Akropolites, who dedicated a eulogy to the saint

[14] For this term, see Mullett 2006 and Messis 2014. [15] Efthymiadis 2015.
[16] Efthymiadis 2015: 118.
[17] Efthymiadis 2015: 121. On the 'novelistic' portrait of Andronikos, see also Gaul 2003 and Bourbouhakis 2009.

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(BHG 627b),[18] and on the *Life* written by Xanthopoulos,[19] a text that appears to be unfinished with its many narrative inconsistencies. Since the text has not received the attention it deserves, we shall look at it in some detail.

The two authors – Xanthopoulos and Akropolites – share the same scenario with some minor yet significant differences. We cannot be certain which author stayed closest to the original version of the tale, but we can probably rely more on the unfailing conservatism of Akropolites.[20] According to the common scenario, the saint was the much-desired child of a rich family (the topos of infertility). However, for Akropolites, the saint's home was Calabria, whereas, for Xanthopoulos, Calabria was the place where she grew up after having been born in the Peloponnese.[21] From an early age she showed signs of holiness, for – according to Akropolites – she avoided being breastfed by her mother on fast days and when she reached the age of 3, her parents dressed her in the monastic habit and confined her to a small house with servants. Here Akropolites implicitly refers to the topos of the heroine's confinement in order to avoid the temptations of the world, as in the case of Sts Barbara or Ioasaph[22] or, in order to cite just one example from the Komnenian novels, the case of Rhodanthe in Theodoros Prodromos's novel.[23] According to Xanthopoulos, the future saint was baptized at the age of 3, but took the monastic vow while attending a nearby church, at the end of her fourteenth year. She was taken to Constantinople by her own parents, anxious to find her a suitable monastery for her confinement, before finally settling in the house of her uncle, who belonged to the family of the Agelastoi. Akropolites reports that the saint, after turning 12, was sent to her anonymous uncle in Constantinople and lived under the same monitoring conditions as in her

[18] The eulogy is edited by Halkin 1987.
[19] On this text, see also Rochow 2003. For an analysis of the relations of this text with the novels/romances, see Nilsson 2009: 252–6.
[20] See the conclusions of Efthymiadis 2015, where we find a similar case.
[21] The text by Xanthopoulos is edited in *AASS Nov. III*, cols. 861–77.
[22] In the *Passion* of Barbara, Dioskoros (her father) shuts her in a tower because she was extremely beautiful; see Symeon Metaphrastes's version: Ταύτην, ὡς λίαν εὐπρόσωπον οὖσαν καὶ τὸ κάλλος ἐξαίσιον, ἄμωμον περισώζειν βουλόμενος, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μηδὲ θεατὴν εἶναι τοῖς ἔξω παραχωρῶν, πύργον δειμάμενος ὑψηλόν, ἐν αὐτῷ τε οἰκίαν φιλοτεχνήσας, ἐκεῖ τὴν Βαρβάραν ἔθετο κατοικεῖν, ἀπρόϊτόν τε οὖσαν, καὶ ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀνδρῶν πᾶσιν ἄψαυστον (*Passion of the Holy and Triumphant Martyr of Christ Barbara* 3 [Papaioannou]). In the case of Euthymios the Hagiorite's *Barlaam and Ioasaph* that follows closely Metaphrastes's *Barbara* in this respect, the young Ioasaph is locked up in a palace so that he might not become exposed to Christianity: see *Barlaam and Ioasaph* 3.18–20 (Volk).
[23] Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 2.175–80 (Marcovich).

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homeland. Both authors report that while the uncle was preparing the wedding of his daughter, she found an opportunity to escape and, unable to get out of town, she found refuge in a pit. A baker (or a miller, according to Xanthopoulos), who had learned about her through a divine dream, visited her and forced her to escape – to head downtown, find a monk and ask him for a male garment, in order to leave the city and find refuge at the monastery of St Auxentios. According to Akropolites, she should do all this under the name of Ioannikios; in the version of Xanthopoulos, there is no monk, the name that the saint adopts is Ioannes, and the monastery where she decides to stay remains anonymous.

When the monks decide to elect her as abbot, she escapes and hides with a solitary monk. Meanwhile, the servants of her father come looking for her and one of them meets her without recognizing her. The demons sow suspicion in the solitary monk as regards the female nature of his student; she thus escapes to Constantinople and settles near the church of the Theotokou tes Peges for three years. This return to 'civilization' is preceded, in Xanthopoulos's narrative, by the change of garment: the saint resumes wearing women's clothing and moves to a monastery for women. By contrast, in Akropolites, the saint continues to live in solitude and does not change garments; when hunters meet her, according to the *Eulogy*, she was living a life of wild animals in a burrow. The hunters recognized in her a female saint resembling Mary of Egypt, in a hunting setting influenced by the *Life of Theoktiste of Lesbos*: 'only by her shape and figure, could they imagine that she was a human being' (ἐκ μόνης τῆς μορφῆς καὶ τοῦ σχήματος ἀπείκαζον αὐτὴν ἄνθρωπον).[24] Emperor Leo VI (886–912) learned about her, either by rumours about her sanctity (Xanthopoulos) or by the hunters (Akropolites), and visited her several times, asking her to intercede for him to have a son; in the version of Xanthopoulos, this happens after the saint has delivered to the emperor a long lesson on the duties of a king (a 'mirror for princes' inserted in the biographical frame).[25] According to Xanthopoulos, who wanted to highlight the connection with the church of the Pege (he had, after all, authored a rewriting of a middle Byzantine collection of *Miracles* that took place there),[26] the saint found a new dwelling, this time in an underground cave in front of the Pege church. Once the son of the emperor, Constantine VII, had been born, she baptized the prince.

At this point, and with a quick reference to the saint's death, the *Eulogy* by Akropolites ends. What follows is the continuation of Xanthopoulos.

[24] Halkin 1987: 63. [25] On this 'mirror', see Odorico 2009: 240–5. [26] Efthymiadis 2006–7.

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The saint, trying to avoid the attendance of the world and the glory, moved one more time. Having searched for a 'deserted' place around Constantinople, she found only a dilapidated house, joined to an abandoned church, inside the city walls and opposite the Peger church (outside of the walls). Euphrosyne seems to spin her protective yarns around the Pege. Leo began hunting the saint and his henchmen prepared the 'net for the game to be captured' (ἐντὸς ἀρκύων ἔχεις τὸ θήραμα).[27] At Leo's prayers, Euphrosyne, surrounded by twelve nuns, replied with an apology – one of the main forms of autobiographical discourse in Byzantium[28] – and asked to be left alone. The last public act of the saint (an indirect indication of the date of the original composition of the story and the circles that produced it in the tenth century) was that she, after having foreseen the rule of Romanos Lekapenos (920–44) and having received honours for it, contributed to the defence of the City against a Bulgar attack. Her last dwelling was the monastery of Skepe, where she died. The narrative of Xanthopoulos closes with the narration of miracles which benefited two empresses of the Palaiologan period, namely the two wives of Andronikos II: Anna et Yolonta/Irene.[29]

The *Life* of Euphrosyne by Xanthopoulos and the *Eulogy* by Akropolites transpose to the fourteenth-century context a paradigm of sainthood that is semi-real, semi-literary. This paradigm was very popular in late antiquity and combines hagiological and novelistic elements in order to create a figure of female sainthood with almost mythical attributes. Euphrosyne of the fourteenth century is a character that merges Euphrosyne of Alexandria (BHG 625–6; from which the theme of disguise was probably drawn), Mary of Egypt and Theoktiste of Lesbos.[30]

Cross-dressing and its multiple readings, social as well as symbolic, is one of the recurring themes in the novelization of sainthood,[31] and its literary treatment could be an indication of the way in which the authors of the fourteenth century explore the boundary between hagiographical and novelistic narrative. However, our authors are rather embarrassed in their treatment of this subject. Euphrosyne does not cross-dress in order to escape marriage and home, as her predecessors did, but to travel outside the city. Euphrosyne is a 'man' during her retirement to the 'desert',

[27] *AASS*, 29. For certain attitudes which assimilate women to hunted animals, see Goldwyn 2015 and 2017, esp. ch. 2.
[28] On the Byzantine tradition of self-representation, see Papaioannou 2013: 132–40.
[29] Efthymiadis 2004: 247–8.
[30] On Theoktiste of Lesbos, see Jazdzewska 2009, Nilsson 2010 and Messis 2014: 329–32.
[31] On cross-dressing, see Anson 1974, Patlagean 1976 and Constantinou 2014.

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while in any relationship that she has with the social world she is entirely a woman. It is true that in the short version by Akropolites, there is no reference to the change from male to female clothing when the saint returns to Constantinople, for the hunters recognize simply a human being, while the change is clearly marked in the version by Xanthopoulos. The embarrassment of Xanthopoulos is, however, obvious, because the change is not sufficiently explained. He represents the saint under attack by demons who want to convince her 'to abandon the male garment, return to being Euphrosyne and come back to Constantinople' (τὰ μὲν ἀνδρῶν ἀποθέσθαι, εἰς Εὐφροσύνην δὲ αὖθις μετασχηματίσῃ καὶ πρὸς τὴν Κωνσταντίνου πείσῃ ἐπανελθεῖν),[32] so as not to lose the path to heaven. And yet, some chapters later, Euphrosyne has her own decision follow the advice of the demons, which does not harm her battle for Christ: 'a little while later, she abandoned men's clothing ... and put on women's garments again' (χρόνου δ'οὐ πολλοῦ διαρρεύσαντος, τὰ μὲν ἀνδρῶν αὖθις ἀποθεμένη ... γυναικῶν ἀμφίοις πάλιν κοσμεῖται).[33] For Xanthopoulos, cross-dressing seems to become an embarrassing literary reminiscence and the saint that he depicts distinguishes herself clearly from her predecessors, who were much better than Euphrosyne positioned at the boundaries between hagiography and the novel.

The third case of rewriting of a tenth-century hagiographical piece is the *Life* of Empress Theophano, written by Nikephoros Gregoras (BHG 1795). The aspect which distinguishes the original *Life* of the tenth century (BHG 1794) and which attributes to it a 'novelistic' character is the description of a beauty contest that earns the heroine an imperial wedding.[34] In the tenth-century *Life*, this episode is narrated in great detail: the imperial decision of the prince's marriage, the gathering of beautiful girls from all over the empire, the twelve chosen, and the game of advanced sighting that was organized by the Athenian candidate who was skilled in the occult sciences, the three finalists, and the final decision (8–10).[35] None of this is subject to the rewriting of Gregoras, who is much more interested in the comparison of Constantinople with the ancient cities (Rome, Babylon, Carthage, Troy, Athens) or in the historical digressions, such as the one on the function of the patricians, drawing on

[32] *AASS*, 12. [33] *AASS*, ch. 16.

[34] On beauty contests in middle Byzantine literature, see Treadgold 1979; Rydén 1985; Vinson 1999 and 2004. On the beauty contests of the Palaiologan romance, see Hunger 1965 and Cupane 1983.

[35] *Life of Empress Theophano* 1–24 (Kurtz).

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Plutarch, or the one on the history of Santabarenos.[36] He replaces the details of the contest with the only ekphrasis of the beauty of the saint. Gregoras choses rhetoric over romantic intrigue, even if the ekphrasis of the heroine traditionally constituted an inevitable element of the ancient novel and featured in the Palaiologan romance as well.

Similar observations can be made as regards the other rewritings of both male and female saints, where we can find certain themes shared by the novel. The *Passion* of St Barbaros (BHG 220) by Constantine Akropolites treats the subject of savagery by presenting the hero as a villain who lives on the margins of civilization,[37] a cherished motif of the ancient novel. In the *Life of Aninas* (BHG 130) rewritten by Theodore Hyrtakenos, besides the insertion into the narrative of the correspondence of the saint with one of the patricians of Caesarea[38] – a technique known from the Clementine Homilies and the *Alexander Romance* – there is a colourful scene, covering several pages,[39] of the tentative rape of a Roman girl by a Scythian barbarian, in which 'l'auteur construit savamment un renversement total des rôles sexuels, donnant qualité d'Amazone intrépide à la femme et de lâche et androgyne ou mieux une demi-femme à l'homme'.[40] After the failed attempt of rape, the barbarian becomes a Christian and the 'novelistic' violence gives way to the dream of Christian peace. We could offer more examples, but for our purposes this suffices.

Thus, the rewritings of the fourteenth century, even if they repeat more or less faithfully the original story, or even if they distance themselves from it, still neither take advantage of the narrative potential of their hypo-texts nor do they highlight or expand it. Rhetoricization rather than novelization, on a formal as much as a thematic level, seems to have been the main option of the authors engaged in rewritings in the Palaiologan period. These authors want to provide 'decent' texts, consistent with the hagiographical canon, and not 'interesting' texts, immersed in the atmosphere and adventures of the novel. In all these cases, the romantic fragments that are seeping into the texts are those of the ancient or Komnenian novel; after all, the Palaiologan romances are either contemporary or even later than several of the texts in question.[41]

[36] *Life of Empress Theophano* 25–45 (Kurtz). See also Hinterberger 2004: 285–94; Talbot 2011: 181; Paraskevopoulou 2013: 84–98.

[37] Akropolites, *Eulogy of Barbaros* 405–20 (Papadopoulos-Kerameus).

[38] *Life of Aninas* 436–9 (Boissonade).

[39] *Life of Aninas* 442–9 (Boissonade).

[40] Messis and Papaioannou 2013: 22.

[41] The attempt to date certain Palaiologan romances in the thirteenth century and the Empire of Nicaea on the basis of some details in the portrayal of court ceremonial remains rather

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Hagiography of Contemporary Saints

The Lengthy Lives of Hesychast Saints (Second Half of the Fourteenth to the First Part of the Fifteenth Century)

In this section, we shall start by looking at the so-called polemical pieces. The political situation after the death of Michael VIII, mentioned above, and the Turkish advance let to the creation of a series of texts about martyrs for the Christian faith (against the Ottomans) and for the Orthodox faith (against the Latins and the friends of the Latins) and hesychast heroes, texts of a highly apologetic and polemical character. This production can be divided into two subcategories. One part was written by cultivated members of the urban elite, by patriarchs or high functionaries of the state (Makarios Chrysokephalos, Nikephoros Gregoras, Joseph Kalothetos, Philotheos Kokkinos, Philotheos of Selymbria);[42] the other part was of monastic origin, which we shall discuss below. Several of the *Lives* of new saints are not deprived of adventures that unfold in a space as expanded as that of the novel, but the heroes remain zealously within a hagiographical frame. I shall discuss two representative examples of this hagiography that combines adventures with theological polemics: the *Life of Sabas the Younger* (BHG 1606), written by Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos (1353–5 and 1364–76) and the *Life of Gregory Sinaites* (BHG 722), written by Patriarch Kallistos (1350–3 and 1355–63), both followers of Hesychasm.

The *Life* of Sabas, an extraordinary text for many reasons, is the last specimen of a hagiography of a *salos* – a holy fool.[43] Sabas, who was born in Thessalonike around 1280 and died at Mount Athos in 1329, visited a large part of the eastern Mediterranean and confronted the most threatening enemies of Byzantium: the Latins and the Muslims. Still a young man, Sabas found refuge at Mount Athos with an old solitary monk, until an attack by Catalans helped him take the decision of going on a pilgrimage to Palestine. On the first part of his journey to sainthood, he travelled via Lemnos, Lesbos, Chios, Ephesos and Patmos before arriving in Cyprus. There he decided to behave like a fool and adopt total

unconvincing. I thus adopt the traditional dating that places these romances chronologically from the late thirteenth century to the first decades of the fourteenth.

42 On the audience of these texts, see Efthymiadis and Kalogeras 2014: 269–72.

43 Talbot 2011: 183, speaks in regard to this text and the *Life of Palamas* by the same author of 'elements in common with romances, inasmuch their heroes travel widely and are captured by the Turks'. On the *Life of Sabas*, see also Congourdeau 2006.

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silence, thus merging with the world of the 'infidels' or 'less faithful'. His familiarity with the Latin world of Cyprus was traumatizing: he barely escaped death, mistreated by a haughty Italian and by wicked Latin monks. He went to Jerusalem, visited the monasteries of Jordan and Sinai and this time dealt with the Muslims. Here we encounter a significant break: as Sabas was facing the hostility of lower-class people, he was recognized as a saint and received the honours of the Muslim leader (the Muslim leaders were, since earlier times, friendly towards our race for a variety of reasons: φίλα γὰρ εἶναι πρός γε τὸ ἡμέτερον γένος διὰ πολλάς τινας αἰτίας τοῖς ἀρχηγοῖς ἐκείνων ἄνωθεν),[44] thus representing the desire of Palamas's followers to find a compromise with the Turkish leaders.

On his return journey, Sabas visited Damascus, Antioch, Crete, Euboia, the Peloponnese, Athens, Tenedos and the Chersonese, journeyed through Macedonian Thrace, reached Herakleia, and then continued on to Constantinople. He finally chose to go to Mount Athos, from where he had begun his wanderings of the world, to settle in the monastery of Vatopedi until his death. In Vatopedi, he began speaking again after twenty years of silence, and met and befriended his biographer. He eagerly participated in contemporary Byzantine politics by intervening to stop the civil war between Kantakouzenos and the regent emperor, by taking a stand against the zealots of Thessalonike, by contributing to the victory of Hesychasm and by refusing to ascend the patriarchal throne.

In this hagiographical saga, there is nothing that explicitly refers to the ancient novel or the Palaiologan romance, but there are certain elements that may remind one of them, not so much on the level of content but in the general *mise en scène* of the narrative. In addition to a wide use of proverbs, maxims, and scientific observations, recalling the novelistic process of authenticating the fictional story,[45] the *Life of Sabas* creates its own narrative space with yet another reference to novelistic techniques: presented as an eyewitness account of the friend and biographer of the saint, Philotheos, the story takes on a realistic effect. Philotheos exceeds the traditional role of the hagiographer and models himself as a secondary character of the narrative by means of an assertive narrative voice, similar to the helper characters of the novel.[46] The text even closes with an episode

[44] *Life of Sabas* 40.15–16 (Tsamis).
[45] On this novelistic technique, adopted by hagiography, see Messis 2014: 315–16.
[46] *Life of Sabas* 84 (Tsamis). On the relationship between the hagiographer and his text, see Hinterberger 2014b. Regarding the protagonists' friends in the ancient novel, see Létoublon 1993 and Hock 1997.

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where the narrator and the hero are put on the same level of saintliness and with a premonitory dream involving the secretary of Philotheos, who assures the exactitude and veracity of the story.

The same characteristics are presented in the *Life* of Gregory Sinaites, who follows a path similar to that of Sabas. Gregory begins his public career as a captive of the Turks, quickly ransomed by the inhabitants of Laodicea in Asia Minor thanks to his talent as a chanter. He first goes to Mount Sinai where he becomes a monk, then to Cyprus and Mount Athos, and then travels on to Chios, Lesbos, Constantinople and Sozopolis. He suffers murderous attacks plotted by wicked monks and confronts robbers, before becoming one of the most important figures in Macedonian Hesychasm. Kallistos, like Philotheos, becomes part of the action and his friendship with the monk Markos is presented in terms of the ideal friendship of the novel.[47]

Despite these rather distant stylistic and thematic reminiscences, there is the fundamental principle governing every relation between hagiography and novel, the particular chronotope that each kind of narration considers as distinctly its own: in hagiography, the adventures of the saints are in close dialogue with a *historical* frame that claims to be *real*, while in the novel the dialogue is with a *fictional* frame that claims to be *realistic*.

Semi-Secular/Semi-Hagiographical Narratives

Let us now move on to the semi-secular, semi-hagiographical pieces. To my knowledge, this category consists of two texts: the *Life of John of Herakleia*, written by Nikephoros Gregoras (BHG 2188), a secular biography rather than a hagiographical piece,[48] and the *Life of John Vatatzes*, written by George of Pelagonia (BHG 933), a text on the margins of the literary production of the second half of the fourteenth century, combining imperial eulogy, political invective and hagiographical narrative.[49] While the *Life* of John is a highly rhetorical piece, in which Gregoras engages in a commentary on the culture of his time and John is compared to Odysseus and Plato, the *Life* of Vatatzes is the only text that has an explicit reference to the Palaiologan romance, with the description of the

[47] *Life of Gregory Sinaites* 22.7–23 (Pomjialovskij). New edition by Beyer 2006.
[48] Hinterberger 2004: 296–7. See also Paraskevopoulou 2013: 99–108.
[49] On the character of this text, see Ciolfi 2013 and 2018. Ciolfi is currently preparing a new edition of the text.

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duel between John and the prince of Britain[50] for the heart of the daughter of the emperor Theodore Laskaris (1205–22). This is a highly interesting passage, so I shall cite it in full.

> Shortly before the wedding [of John and Irene] a man coming from Britain opposed it, big in physique and magnificent in appearance, noble in the fight, haughty for his wealth, nephew of the king of Britain (ἀνὴρ τῶν ἐκ Βρεττανίας), who was looking forward to having the emperor's daughter as a reward for his nobility. He boasted and did everything to achieve this goal, decorating his body with luxury garments, being concerned of his look, boldly demonstrating the strength which was in him. He organized indeed some competitions (ἀγῶνάς τε γὰρ γυμνικοὺς καθίστη) and confronted openly those who wanted to challenge him, in order to demonstrate the vigor he had. And those convinced of their own strength appeared, distinguished themselves in duel but, at the end, went back defeated. He was full of arrogance and believed to be absolutely invincible. He believed so until the moment when, as the saying goes, he fell on a 'black-bottomed' (μελαμπύγῳ) man, on the virtuous and noble John. [John] Considering it unbearable that our men [the Byzantines] were overwhelmed by his arrogance, the latter undertook personally the combat. The man from Britain agreed to face the challenge with immense joy, hoping to defeat him as easily as had done with the others. Then, a public arena was set up (εἱστήκει τοίνυν τὸ θέατρον). The opponents showed up with ardor, starting the duel calmly and without a tension. But as soon as they caught fire – like torches – and each of them threw themselves into the fight, they 'fell on one another' and ripped their skin 'like lions who eat raw flesh or wild boars whose strength is untameable' [Hom. Il. 7.256–7]. The battle was hard on both sides, until John had the upper hand and, having overturned his adversary, threw him on the ground. At this point, he understood at his expense that there were better 'Panachaeans', who could ruin the insolents' attitudes. After this defeat, the opponent calmed down and then he did not show up in combat with the arrogance he had before. When he saw that the marriage he desired was celebrated for another, with no hope he went back home.[51]

This passage, which certainly describes a joust, reproduces a scenario that we find in numerous detailed versions in the Palaiologan romance. The motif appears in two versions: in the first and most typical version, the prize of the joust is the hand of the princess; in the second, the fight concerns the protection of hero's wife from potential kidnappers. There are

[50] It is interesting to note that Bretanos is the name of the eunuch of Rhodamne in *Livistros and Rhodamne* version **V**, 1193, 1194 etc. (Lendari), while the name of the eunuch is Betanos in *Livistros et Rhodamne* version **α**, 1426, 1533 etc (Agapitos).

[51] *Life of Vatatzes* 21 (Heisenberg). On this episode, see also Ciolfi 2018.

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jousts in the *Tale of Achilles*, in *Livistros and Rhodamne* and in *Imperios and Margarona*; there is even a similar episode in *Digenis Akritis*, in the fight between the hero and the amazon Maximou. In the *Tale of Achilles*, more precisely, the episode involves a Frank who defeats the young soldiers and Patroklos before being defeated by Achilles, but this fight becomes the pretext for a verbal attack by Achilles against his fearful wife.[52]

The version that is the closest to our text is, however, to be found elsewhere. According to our story, the arrogant young knight, a native of Britain, arrived in the old world of Byzantium where he fought the final battle with another noble, from an old aristocratic family, who preserved the honour of the princess, his future wife. An implicit tension can be seen between the Byzantines and the Franks, between the old world and the new – the first characterized by moral values and ultimate efficiency, the latter by inordinate arrogance and temporary victories. This version of the narrative recalls, with some obvious differences, the story of the old knight who defeats, one after the other, the companions of King Arthur (the prince of Britain – Ἀρτούζου Βρετανίας) for the honour of a girl, an episode from the Arthurian cycle that circulated in Greek in the fourteenth century.[53] The most important difference with our text lies in the fact that John wins Irene with his victory, while the *Old Knight* preserves the honour of the young girl he accompanies. Both texts, however, participate in the same rejection of that way of life which is promoted by the chivalric romances. We cannot exclude the possibility that the author of the *Life* knows and manipulates this story to his own ends – in order to denounce, that is, the western values that had invaded the Byzantine court – by entering in dialogue with the contemporary romances and the popular translations of western fictional texts.

Monastic Hagiography

Finally, we shall consider monastic hagiography. In relation to the other hagiographical categories of the same period, this category is more diverse in content and form, with a clear predilection for the vernacular language and with a greater porosity towards the extraordinary and the imaginary, present also in the Palaiologan romance. Nevertheless, several of these texts

[52] *Tale of Achilles* 662–5 (Smith).
[53] *Old Knight* (Breillat). On this text, see Beaton 1996: 143–4, and Goldwyn 2012. See also the political interpretation of the text by Rizzo Nervo 1985.

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concern prominent figures of hesychast monasticism and do not escape the polemical character of the hagiographical category discussed above.

In some of these texts, we find echoes of the ancient novel, mediated by several layers or intermediary hagiographical texts. Thus, for example, in the *Life of Philotheos of Athos* from the fourteenth century (BHG 1534) there is a scene of recognition between mother and son. More precisely, the young Philotheos and his brother were separated from their mother in Asia Minor, recruited by the Ottomans for the ranks of the army (*devşirme*), but they escaped thanks to the grace of the Virgin, finding themselves in a double (masculine and feminine) monastery in Macedonia. In the same monastery, by divine intervention – announced by the author, turning to his audience: 'I become dizzy and my mind reels, as to how I might tell what happened to their earthly mother. What should I say and what can I tell?' – their mother found refuge.[54] 'The wondrous way in which she recognized her children' (ξένην ἀναγνώρισιν) follows, in the form of a moving scene of reunion rather than the classical recognition obtained through signs:

> after she saw clearly that they were her offspring, she was overwhelmed with emotion and was overcome with joyful sadness. Because of her ineffable joy she thought she was dreaming, and was barely able to approach them . . . they recognized her and ran to her, fell at her feet, and embracing her, covered her with kisses.[55]

Scenes of recognition are present in the ancient novel, as well as in the Komnenian and Palaiologan romances, but also in several hagiographical pieces of the late antique and Byzantine period.[56] The recognition of the protagonists in a monastery appears in the romance *Imperios and Margarona*,[57] but it is rather weak as an evidence of direct influence between this romance and the hagiographical piece, dating from the same period. It would be wiser to assume that the episode has been created by the author not due to his direct knowledge of the romance, but through the use of these motifs by other hagiographical texts. Also the treatment of the remains of Philotheos (a piece of them was taken away and was returned later because of a miraculous vision) has elements in common with the treatment that the hunters imposed on the body of Theoktiste of Lesbos, the hagiography written by Niketas Magistros in the tenth century.

[54] *Life of Philotheos of Mount Athos* 3 (McGrath).
[55] *Life of Philotheos of Mount Athos* 3 (McGrath).
[56] On the scenes of recognition in hagiography, see Boulhol 1993.
[57] *Imperios and Margarona* 672–778 (Wagner).

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In some hagiographical texts, the world of fantasy intrudes, but in that case too it remains uncertain whether a motif has been drawn from the contemporary romance or, more likely, constitutes a free reworking of a hagiographical subject. For example, in a hagiographical piece of the fifteenth century, the *Eulogy* of Gregory of Nicomedia, written by Matthew Kamariotes, a 'magic' horse surpasses the waves of the sea and leads the saint from Constantinople to Nicomedia,[58] while in the *Life of Symeon and Theodore*, probably written in the fourteenth century but preserved in a textual form of the eighteenth century, the flying animal is a dragon.[59] The flying horse is a motif transferred from folklore to the Palaiologan romance (*Livistros*),[60] but also characteristic of several saints of the proto- and middle Byzantine period, using horses when they wish to transport receivers of miracles from very far (Euphemia and the three martyrs of Edessa, the *Miracles* of George and Nikolaos).[61] The dragon also appears in both hagiography (e.g. in St George) and romance (*Kallimachos*). Accordingly, despite some superficial similarities, all indications suggest that hagiographers adopted elements of fantastic folklore from previous hagiography rather than from contemporary romance.

Separate Paths

This non-exhaustive survey has revealed some stylistic and thematic similarities between romance and hagiography, but, more so, underlined considerable differences.

First, we have differences of a literary kind. In contrast to the complex plots of the Palaiologan romances, hagiography offers episodes inserted in a fairly predictable biographical frame. Even if these episodes share romancing elements and use novelistic techniques aiming at the dramatization or plausibility of the narration, they do not affect the general structure of the hagiographical narrative, because they are elements that can be detached without affecting the general narrative frame. If rhetoric is the basis of much creative writing in Byzantium and the degree of sophistication of a text is measured by its adherence to the rhetorical canon, much hagiography and the novel in its ancient and Komnenian versions may share

[58] Eulogy of Gregory of Nicomedia 40–5 (Chatzimichail).

[59] *Life of Symeon and Theodore* 95–6 (Anagnostakis and Justin the Monk).

[60] Cupane 2009.

[61] On the *Miracle* of Euphemia and the Goth, see Messis and Papaioannou 2013; on the *Miracles* of George, see Grotowski 2003; on the *Miracles* of Nikolaos, see Sevcenko 1983: 143–48.

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some common substrate[62] (with the difference that in the novels, rhetoric must be converted into multiple narrative scenarios, while this is optional in hagiography); when hagiography and the novel converge in this regard, we often refer to the result as – in my view imprecisely – 'novelistic' or 'romancing' hagiography. However, whatever this relation or balance established between hagiography and the ancient/Komnenian novel, it was completely perturbed by the Palaiologan romances. These romances break with the omnipotence of rhetoric by adopting a new tool of literary expression, the vernacular language and verse, while Palaiologan hagiography, especially the urban kind, puts even more emphasis on rhetoric. With regard then to the literary aspect, hagiography and the Palaiologan romance follow parallel paths without any obvious point of encounter. Monastic hagiography in the vernacular, which could find sources of inspiration in the contemporary romances, also seems quite suspicious of the romances and turns rather to monastic literature of the past for inspiration.

Second, we have differences of an ideological kind. In the semi-secular biography of John Vatatzes we could detect some explicit or implicit dialogue with the contemporary romances, but in all the other hagiographical texts (both classicizing and vernacular) we come across a well-considered and desired distance or, rather, indifference to the contemporary romances. The hagiographers, usually men of the Church and often representing high culture, pointedly ignored the romances and it may be assumed that they also despised the circles in which it was produced, an urban society oriented towards the West. In the eyes of hagiographers and their intended audience, the romances would appear as disrespecting the two most important pillars of traditional Byzantine cultural identity, national pride and moral purity: Greek *paideia* (namely rhetorical learning), that is, and Christian decency, in its Byzantine guises.

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[62] Konstan and Ramelli 2014: 181: 'Christian and pagan storytelling techniques and styles of characterization are manifestations of a common literary (or subliterary) culture'.

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CHAPTER 12

Homosocial Desire in the War of Troy

Between (Wo)men

Stavroula Constantinou

The anonymous Byzantine Greek romance of the thirteenth century (between 1267 and 1281, according to Elizabeth Jeffreys) known as the *War of Troy*,[1] which has been widely treated as a 'more or less close translation from its Western original',[2] Benoît de Saint-Maure's Old French *Roman de Troie* (twelfth century), has – since its edition in the 1990s, more than twenty years ago – seldom attracted critical attention.[3] Another reason for scholars' lack of interest in the *War of Troy* is related to the fact that it has been considered as not including any 'proper erotic material',[4] despite Jeffreys's valid suggestion that it 'represents one of the first attempts to explore the psychology of erotic love in narrative form in medieval literature'.[5]

Due to its epic character, the plot of the *War of Troy* differs to a great extent from that of the other Palaiologan romances. However, this is not a reason to exclude it from the category of the so-called Byzantine romances in which equally diverse texts, such as *Digenis Akritis*,[6] the *Tale of Achilles* and the *Tale of Troy*,[7] are included. As Jeffreys rightly puts it, '[the *War of Troy*] shares the [Byzantine] romances' characteristic features: it is anonymous, in the fifteen-syllable line, with repeated phrases and a fluid

[1] The *War of Troy* is edited in Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996. The numbering of this edition is followed in the passages discussed here. All English translations are my own. For more information on the poem, see Chapter 8 in the present volume.

[2] Beaton 1996: 135 and 136; see also Lendari 2014: 8 and Shawcross 2003: 140. For a discussion of Byzantinists' treatment of late Byzantine fiction, see Constantinou 2013: 227–9.

[3] Apart from the introduction of the text's edition (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys 1996: xiii–cxxv) and a couple of articles (Jeffreys 2013 and Lendari 2014; see also Soltic 2014 for a linguistic approach to the text), there are no other previous literary studies that are exclusively devoted to the *War of Troy*. As for studies that partially consider aspects of the poem, these again are not more than one or two articles (e.g. Goldwyn 2015: 72–8; Shawcross 2003: 140–5). Fortunately, this situation is now changing, since the *War of Troy* receives relatively high attention in the present volume where three out of its thirteen chapters discuss the poem extensively (consider also Constantinou, forthcoming). This development will hopefully raise further critical interest in the *War of Troy*.

[4] Agapitos 2004: 14.

[5] In Agapitos 2004: 62.

[6] See, for example, Beaton 1996: 30–51 and Garland 1990.

[7] Agapitos 2004: 13.

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textual tradition, and uses a form of the vernacular'.[8] To these features, one could also add a couple of others, such as the use of erotic terms found in the love romances (e.g. ἐρωτοληψία in 9327; φεδούλα in 12396, 12415 and 12479) and the presence of the persona of the witch, which in the *War of Troy* is incorporated by Medea, who in fact falls madly in love with Jason.[9] A more systematic analysis of the *War of Troy* could reveal that it has much more, and even more striking, common characteristics with the other Byzantine romances.[10]

By bringing to the fore essential characteristics of the *War of Troy*, the present chapter aims at contributing to the literary analysis of a neglected, yet important and complex, late Byzantine text. In what follows, the poem's male ethics and ideologies, which are also shared by its French model, will be examined to better understand its epic plot and poetics that could, in turn, strengthen our understanding of the literary system within which the *War of Troy* was composed. Of course, the scope of this short contribution does not allow a comparative investigation between either the *War of Troy* and the *Roman de Troie* or the *War of Troy* and other Byzantine texts, such as the love romances and works thematizing the Trojan War.[11] However, the literary approach attempted here could prove useful to future (comparative) readings of these texts.

The world of the massive *War of Troy* – comprising about 14,400 fifteen-syllable verses, and thus being the largest romance produced in Byzantium – like that of most Byzantine and western medieval narrative literature, is the product of patriarchal societies, and thus may be termed homosocial, a neologism drawn from the social sciences and meant to distinguish between erotic (homosexual) and non-erotic (homosocial) same-sex bonds.[12]

In her pioneering book, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1985) that is paraphrased in this chapter's title, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick acknowledges the gender biases and power games of homosociality by coining the phrase 'male homosocial desire' to refer to the total spectrum of male bonds that involve friendship, mentorship,

[8] Jeffreys 2013: 224.
[9] For a discussion of Medea in the *War of Troy* and the other witches in the Palaiologan romances, see Goldwyn 2015.
[10] See, for example, Jeffreys's contribution to this volume (Chapter 8) in which she shows the *War of Troy*'s verbal links with other Palaiologan romances.
[11] For the use of Troy material in earlier Byzantine literature, particularly that of the twelfth century, see Nilsson 2004. See also Chapters 1 and 9 in the present volume.
[12] Kimmel and Aronson 2003: 396–8.

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rivalry, institutional subordination, homosexual genitality and economic exchange within which the various forms of the male traffic in women takes place. As far as 'desire' is concerned, Sedgwick understands it as the 'affective or social force, the glue, even when its manifestation is hostility or hatred or something less emotively charged, that shapes an important relationship'.[13]

As Sedgwick points out, there are significant disparities between male and female homosociality in societies where men and women have different access to power. For instance, she proposes that a distinct triangulated desire emerges when two males become competitors over a woman. This very desire is strongly related to the traffic of the woman who is repressed. At the same time, the men's bond is strengthened through this triangular relationship. Sedgwick suggests that homosociality has a contradictory structure. On the one hand, it is a system in which male homoeroticism is intensively evoked in order to reinforce existing male ties. On the other hand, however, it is a homophobic system in which any concomitant homosexual trace is thoroughly excluded. In addition, it is a heteronormative regime in which men must incorporate women as lovers into the patriarchy through their ritual exchange, especially marriage. Simultaneously, this is a misogynistic regime in which men must socially marginalize women, as the latter's ascendency is seen as a threat to male interests and privileges. Unlike women, who are socially expected to form emotional bonds with members of the same sex, men of patriarchal societies have traditionally constructed an 'ideological homophobia' which prevents such emotional connections with other men. Therefore, men have historically used women to connect with or confront other men, while, at the same time, they have managed to maintain male dominance.

Sedgwick's concept of male homosocial desire proves eminently suitable for approaching the *War of Troy*, the main plot of which centres around two wars between the Greeks and the Trojans and the civil conflicts within each camp, which are initiated by men through the bodies of women.[14] During these wars, the warriors of each site are bound together by loyalty to their leader and by comradeship with and mutual support for each other. As a group, the warriors of the one camp are united against those of the

[13] Sedgwick 1985: 2.

[14] In fact, Sedgwick's concept of homosociality has been already employed successfully in a number of studies approaching ancient and western medieval literature. See, for example, the following studies for antiquity: Gunderson 2000: 13, 153; Lyons 2003; Rabinowitz and Auanger 2002: 1–33; Williams 2010: 256. As for the Middle Ages, see Armstrong 2003: 27–66 and 173–212; Burns 1993: 203–40; Dinshaw 1989: 58–64; Hansen 1983; Ingham 2015: 139–40; Kelly 2000: 86–90.

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other by their thirst for honour and dominance, which are primarily marked through the acquisition of the opponents' women, who are treated as valuable prizes. It has to be pointed out that the warriors' desire for friendship is as strong as their desire for enmity, and it is mostly through the driving force of such homosocial desires that the poem's heroes undertake actions, which thus enable the progress of the war and the development of the narrative. In other words, when homosocial desire – which, according to Sedgwick, is the energy that forms same-sex relationships – enters a literary world, such as that of the *War of Troy*, it acquires a specific narrative significance: it becomes the force that shapes the narrative.

By focusing on the all-male realm of war, the *War of Troy* becomes the male homosocial Byzantine poem *par excellence*. This is not to suggest that female homosocial structures are absent from the poem. However, Trojan women form bonds in order to serve their men's interests and desires and not their own. Thus while the Greek and Trojan warriors seek mastery and domination over each other through the possession of a woman, the Trojan women, as will be shown, create homosocial relationships and undertake collective actions to serve their men's needs and goals. In so doing, they display a behaviour that is no less misogynistic and male-oriented than that of their male counterparts. In other words, all the homosocial bonds, either male or female, have the same objective: to promote male ideals and interests. In such a male-centred world, female desires are unimportant, and consequently non-existent.

As already suggested, the homosocial structures of the *War of Troy* offer a key to understanding its male ethos and poetics. In the following text, I will first examine how the trafficking of the poem's two most important women, Priam's sister Hesione and Menelaus's wife Helen, instigate a complex system of male homosociality that sustains the whole structure of the *War of Troy*. After exploring the male homosociality that is produced through Hesione and Helen, I will go on to briefly examine the characteristics and narrative function of female homosociality. As already mentioned, female homosociality shares the male-oriented purposes of its male counterpart. However, it has its own distinct elements and serves different narrative purposes, which become clearer through its reading against male homosociality. A comparative approach between male and female homosociality not only offers a better understanding of the work's masculine ideals, but also a better examination of its poetics.[15]

[15] The function of literature as a carrier of ideology has been explored by a number of theorists. See, for example, Eagleton 2012 and Jameson 1981.

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Between Men

The trafficking of Hesione and especially of Helen serves a variety of functions: it separates the poem's world into two halves, sets two communities against each other, produces rivalries between the men desiring the two heroines, and initiates civil conflicts. It also creates the circumstances that allow for the trafficking of other women between the Trojans and the Greeks as well as among the Greeks after the two sacks of Troy. A couple of important cases in point are Briseis, the daughter of the seer Calchas, and Polyxena, the youngest daughter of Priam, whose entrance in the masculine exchange economy establishes further male bonds and new triangular relationships. Even though the handlings of both Briseis and Polyxena, as well as those of other Trojan women, are equally important for understanding the literary world of the *World of Troy* and its male ethics, they will not be examined here for reasons of space.

Another two triangles that confirm the *War of Troy*'s 'ideological homophobia', and which cannot be further discussed here either, are those between Achilles, Patroklos and Hektor and that of Achilles, Polyxena and Paris. These two triangles are strongly interrelated, as the first calls for the second in order for the poem's homophobic order to be restored. An intense personal rivalry is created between Achilles and Hektor after the latter kills Patroklos, Achilles's treasured friend. On the battlefield, Achilles looks for Hektor, and when he locates his enemy he addresses him in a hateful manner, promising to kill him for having him deprived of the happiness he enjoyed with Patrokos. Resorting to hate speech, Hektor dishonours Achilles for his former 'illicit' relationship with Patroklos suggesting that his partner's death is a divine revenge for a previous 'shameful' life:

> <Ἀπὸ> τὴν θλῖψιν τὴν πολλὴν τὴν λέεις ὅτι ἔκαμά σου
> καὶ τὰ κακά, ἂν ἠμπορῇς, ἐκδίκησιν νὰ ἐπάρῃς,
> τὴν θλῖψιν τοῦ συντρόφου σου, ἐκείνου τοῦ Παντρούκλου,
> ὁποὺ πολλὲς τὸν ἔγνωθες φορὲς εἰς τὸ κλινάρι
> γυμνὸν εἰς τοὺς βραχιόνας σου μέσα καὶ τὸν ἐκράτεις.
> Εἶν' τῆς αἰσχύνης ἄσχημα παιγνίδια, ἐντροπιασμένα,
> ὁποὺ τὰ πλέον κακεύουσιν οἱ θεοὶ καὶ ἐπαίρνουν
> ἐκδίκησιν πολλὰ γοργὸν ἀπὸ τὴν δύναμίν τους.[16]

For the great sorrow that you say I have caused you | and the calamities take revenge, if you can | [for] your partner's sorrow, that Patroclus, | whom you have

[16] *War of Troy* 5622–9 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys).

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known many times in bed, | holding him naked in your very arms. | These are bad games of disgrace, shameful, | which the Gods reproach in the most resilient way and [for which they] take | revenge very quickly using their whole power.

Later, Achilles's love for Patroklos is replaced by his love and desire for Polyxena, through which the rumours about his homosexuality cease to exist and are forgotten. In his attempt to acquire Polyxena, Achilles contacts her mother, Hekabe, who after consultation with Priam agrees to give Polyxena as a wife to Achilles provided that the Greek warrior gives up the war against Troy. Eventually, Polyxena is not given to Achilles, who is killed by Paris, for not keeping his promise. However, Polyxena's trafficking does not end here. After the fall of Troy, the Greeks offer her to Pyrrhos, son of Achilles, who kills her over his father's tomb.

As implied earlier, in the male homosocial bonds that are depicted in the *War of Troy*, honour and shame play a central role. Honour, the most important male value in the poem, unites heroes in their attempt to become praiseworthy and, if successful, to satisfy their desire for general recognition.[17] In their search for honour, comrades might eventually dishonour themselves or others. In most cases, a hero's honour is another man's dishonour. Dishonour, on the other hand, brings men together in their aim to restore their lost honour. For them, it is more preferable to die in honour than to live in shame. In addition, honour creates relations of rivalry between companions; a more glorious hero is envied by his less celebrated comrade or relative.

The significance of the honour–shame binary in these heroes' relationships is marked from the very beginning. The poem opens with a rivalry between the Greek king Pileus and his nephew Jason, who is renowned for his bravery. It is this rivalry that sets the story going by leading the heroes to undertake actions that in turn initiate the further rivalries through which the plot unfolds. In his attempt to dishonour Jason, Pileus sends him in search of the Golden Fleece in Colchis, an expedition that has already led many prominent heroes to their deaths. Jason, on the other hand, follows his uncle's proposal gladly because he sees it as an opportunity to gain greater honour. Eventually, the hero manages (with Medea's help) to seize the Golden Fleece, an achievement that not only provides him with more glory, but also transforms his uncle's rivalry into friendship. Pileus now honours Jason by bestowing prizes on him.

[17] It has to be pointed out that honour, particularly in relation to women, is also the central male value in the Homeric *Iliad*. See, for example, Cairns 1993: 40–100, Friedrich 1977 and Smith 2016.

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However, the honour that the Greeks obtain through Jason's accomplishment is overshadowed by the dishonour which Jason and his close companion Herakles receive from Laomedes. During their short stay in Troy, the two men feel extremely insulted by Laomedes's urgent and hostile message that they should immediately leave his land. They thus bind themselves with a vow for revenge. Herakles undertakes to inform all the Greek kings about Laomedes's shameful act against them and to ask for their solidarity. Eventually, the Greeks agree unanimously to take military action against Laomedes. Their forces arrive at Troy, where Greek honour is restored through the execution of Laomedes, the sack of the city, the capture of the noble Trojan women, and their distribution among the bravest warriors. Among the captives is Hesione, the most beautiful and highborn woman of Troy, the daughter of Laomedes and sister of Priam, who happens to be away during the destruction of his city. Hesione is given by Herakles, the leader of the Greek army, to Telamonian. In so doing, Herakles honours the prowess of Telamonian, who was the first warrior to enter Troy. Thus the most valuable Trojan woman becomes both the sign of a hero's honour and the means through which Herakles's and Telamonian's relationship of mutual respect is cemented. Telamonian is happy to have his bravery acknowledged through the valuable prize of Hesione.

While Telamonian's honour is confirmed through the acquisition of Hesione, that of Priam is completely lost. Priam's feeling of shame is aggravated, and as a result his enmity against the Greeks is inflamed for two further reasons: first, his sister, a king's daughter, is given to a mere 'soldier' (1330), as he calls Telamonian, that is, a man who is not worthy of her value, and second, this very soldier treats her not as his lawful wife, but as a shameful slave (1330–4). Now it is Priam who has to undertake actions towards the restoration of his honour and that of his fellow citizens. He summons the Trojan nobility to discuss the matter, and it is decided to offer friendship to the Greeks provided that they give Hesione back. The Greeks turn down Priam's alliance because they do not want to lose the prestige conferred to them through the attainment of Hesione. The Greeks, and Telamonian in particular, assert their supremacy over the Trojans and Priam not just by turning down their offer, but also by further dishonouring them through their ambassador, a Trojan nobleman, Antenor whom they treat badly and send away with threats.

By choosing to keep Hesione, and thus to maintain the honour she bestows upon them, the Greeks decide on a hostile relationship with the Trojans, who in turn have to regain their own honour according to

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the male ethos of the poem. In order to achieve their purpose, the Trojans decide to exchange Hesione with a Greek woman who is equal with or superior to her. This criterion is fulfilled by Helen, who is both a queen and the world's most beautiful woman. Priam's reaction to Helen's arrival in Troy is quite revealing:

> Ὁ Πάρις ἐκ τὸ χέριν της ἐκράτει τὴν Ἑλένην·
> τὰ κάλλη τοῦ προσώπου της ἀστράπτουσι τὸν τόπον.
> Ὁ Πρίαμος ἐξέβηκεν, ἐσυναπάντησέ τους·
> χαρὰν μεγάλην ἔποικεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Πάρι·
> τὰ κούρση ὅλα τοῦ ἔδειξαν, τὰς φυλακὰς ὡσαύτως,
> Ἑλένην τὴν ἐξαίρετον· ὅλα τοῦ ἐπροσκομίσαν.
> . . .
> ἐθάρρει καὶ τὴν ἄλλαξιν νὰ ποίσῃ τῆς Ἑλένης,
> τὴν ἀδελφήν του Ἑσιονὰν νὰ ἀλλάξῃ μετ' ἐκείνην.[18]

Paris is holding Helen's hand. | The beauty of her face illuminates the place. | Priam comes out to meet them. | The king is very pleased with Paris. | They show him all the booty, the prisoners likewise, | Helen, the stunning woman; they bring before him everything. | . . . | He is happy to compensate with Helen, | to exchange his sister Hesione with her.

As indicated in the above passage, Priam is extremely happy to welcome Helen in Troy, for her acquisition is the most powerful symbol of his restored honour. Interestingly, he is no longer concerned about his sister's fate; her maltreatment ceases hurting his male pride. Thus Hesione and Helen, due to their social status and beauty, are rendered by men precious objects supporting male relations of either enmity or friendship through which male honour is promoted or demoted.

In comparison with the trafficking of Hesione, that of Helen reduplicates the male relationships formed through Priam's sister, and it also further initiates more complex and often paradoxical ones. On the one hand, Helen both unites and divides the warriors of each side, and on the other, she brings together almost all male protagonists, the poem's male narrator, and probably his audience, which is unified against her because she is held responsible for the war and the destruction of so many great men. The condemnation of Helen is a recurrent theme in the *War of Troy*. The narrator, various heroes of both sides, and even the heroine herself voice her guilt at different times, as, for example, when she says:

[18] *War of Troy* 1947–52, 1955–6 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys).

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Τὸν θάνατον παρακαλῶ γοργὸν νὰ μὲ εἶχε σφάξει·
λαχαίνει ἡ γῆ ἐξάπαντος νὰ μηδὲν μὲ βασταίνῃ.
Ἀπὸ γυναῖκαν πώποτε τόσον κακὸν οὐκ ἦλθεν,
ὡς ἦλθεν ἄρτι ἀπὸ ἐμέν, οὐδέποτε νὰ ἔλθῃ!
Τέτοια ζημία οὐκ ἐγίνετον, ὡς ἐγίνη ἐξ ἐμένα!
Βασιλεῖς τόσα πλούσιοι, εὐγενικοὶ ἀμιράδες,
δουκάδες τόσα εὐγενικοί, κόντοι καὶ μεγιστᾶνοι
καὶ λαὸς πάλιν ἕτερος ἑκατὸν μυριάδες
ὁποὺ δι᾽ ἐμὲν ἐχάθησαν, καὶ πῶς νὰ ζῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον;
Δι᾽ ἐμὲν χῆραι ἐγίνησαν αἱ ἀρχόντισσες τοῦ κόσμου.
Ἐμὲν νὰ καταράσωνται ἕως τὰ τέλη κόσμου
διὰ τὸ κακὸν τὸ φοβερὸν ὁποὺ δι᾽ ἐμὲν ἐγίνη.
Θλίψη μεγάλη ἐγίνετον, ὁπόταν ἐγεννήθην.
Ποτὲ μὴ εἶχα γεννηθῆ, μὴ εἶχα φανῆ εἰς τὸν κόσμον![19]

I plead that death would have soon killed me. | The earth should no longer hold me. | Such a great evil has never come from a woman, | what has now come out of me, should never be repeated. | Such a loss has never occurred, as the one that came from me. | So rich kings, noble emirs, | so noble dukes, counts and magnates | and again other people, hundred myriads | who got lost because of me, and how could I live in this world? | Because of me the world's noble women have become widows. | They would condemn me until the end of the world | for the dreadful evil that occurred because of me. | There was a great calamity when I was born. | I wish I was never born; I should have never appeared to the world.

The fact that Helen's transfer creates more male interactions than that of Hesione is not surprising. In contrast to Hesione, who is never brought back to Troy, Helen is exchanged twice (before and after the second sack of Troy). In addition, the poem focuses on the Greeks' second military attack against Troy, which is driven both by Helen's abduction and, before that, the Greeks' reluctance to return Hesione. Just before and during this second war, which unlike the first one is long lasting, there is plenty of narrative space that allows for the formation and development of more male bonds.

The first male relationships that are associated with Helen are realized among the Trojans just before her capture. The idea of the replacement of Hesione with a Greek woman strengthens Priam's ties with the large majority of the Trojan nobility while at the same time establishing his enmity against his son, the seer Helenos, who warns him against such an act because, as he knows, it will bring Troy's final destruction. When Paris brings Helen to Troy, Priam's affection for him becomes stronger, and

[19] *War of Troy* 10448–61 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys).

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Paris becomes closer to his father. Unavoidably, Helen mediates further aggression between the Greeks and the Trojans. Feeling dishonoured by the Trojans, the Greeks undertake immediate action.

Their leader, Agamemnon, behaves as a second Priam, and a similar scenario of male homosociality is repeated. He summons all the Greek kings and, during the assembly, they agree to fight against the Trojans. Before starting the war, Agamemnon sends ambassadors to Troy asking for peace through the return of Helen. Now it is Priam's turn to reproach and send away the Greek ambassadors. Of course, Priam's hostile and insulting behaviour cannot but force the Greeks to make war. In the meantime, the Greeks acquire an ally from the enemy's camp, the prophet Calchas, who becomes a constant supporter of their war against Troy. During this war, the warriors of both sides aim to prove themselves in battle. Those who are distinguished acquire the recognition through which male ties in each camp are reinforced. The more they fight, the more relationships they create.

As soon as Helen becomes Paris's lover, an erotic rivalry is established between Paris and the heroine's first husband, Menelaos. Knowing that Helen watches the war, the two heroes compete with each other, and their erotically inspired bravery turns out to be extremely exhibitionistic. Each of them seeks to show Helen his military power in order to gain her admiration. Thus, in Helen becomes the real motivation for fighting. The two men's love for the heroine is as intense as their hatred for each other. As the cuckolded husband, Menelaos seeks to regain his dignity on the battlefield, not only by proving himself a better warrior than Paris, but also by avenging the shame Paris brought on him by stealing his wife. He thus challenges his rival to a duel in which the latter is badly injured. Menelaos, however, does not manage to kill Paris. The mightier Hektor prevents him from doing so. Feeling ashamed by his defeat, Paris informs Helen, who provides her consolation. She, however, after addressing her consoling words to Paris, runs to 'her' Hektor, as the narrator puts it (εἶπεν ὅτι ὑπᾷ νὰ ἰδῇ τὸν Ἕκτοράν της [she said that she was going to see her Hector], *War of Troy* 4888). It is Hektor that she wants to greet after the day's battle, since, for her, as for all the Trojans and even the Greeks, he is one of the warriors that should be admired and honoured.

The first internal conflict of the Greeks about Helen takes place when Achilles makes the aforementioned pact with the Trojans concerning the exchange of Polyxena with his withdrawal from the war. The conflict between Achilles and the other Greek warriors over Helen starts when the hero summons them to suggest the war's end. His argument is that the

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war against the Trojans confers dishonour rather than honour on them, for they have lost more than thirty thousand illustrious warriors for the sake of Menelaos's wife. His words reflect those of Helen quoted above:

> Εἰς κακὴν τὴν συνείδησιν ἐσέβημεν καὶ φρόνα,
> ὅτι διὰ τόσην ἀφορμὴν μιᾶς γυναικὸς καὶ μόνης.
> ἡμεῖς ἐλευθερώσαμεν τόσα βασίλεια πλούσια.
> Πλέον τῶν πέντε γὰρ ἐτῶν καθήμεθα ἐνταῦθα
> καὶ ἀκόμη οὐκ ἐδυνήθημεν νὰ κάμωμε ἔργον τέτοιον
> ὁποὺ νὰ τὸ ἀφηγούμεθα τιμὴ διὰ νὰ μᾶς ἔλθῃ·
> . . .
> Ποτὲ πικρότερη βουλὴ καὶ <πλέον> μεγάλη ζημία
> οὐκ ἐγεννήθη πώποτε, ὅσον διὰ μίαν γυναῖκαν
> ἐγίνη νὰ ἀφανιστοῦν αἱ τόσαι βασιλεῖαι.
> Ἄν εἴχετε ἐμπρωτότερα οἱ πάντες ἠθελήσει
> νὰ στρέψετε Ἑσιονάν, τὴν ἀδελφὴν Πριάμου,
> ὁ Πάρις οὐδὲν ἔρχετον ποτὲ διὰ νὰ κουρσεύσῃ,
> ἐντροπὴν ἐπιζήμιον τίποτε νὰ μᾶς ποίσῃ.[20]

We have arrived at a wrong understanding and decision, | because of just a single woman. | While we have freed so many rich kingdoms, | we are sitting here now for more than five years, | and we still have not managed to perform just a single deed | which we could talk about, so that we might achieve some honour. | . . . Such a bitter decision, and even greater loss, | was never born, because of just a single woman, | for whom so many kingships have been lost. | If you all had agreed earlier to return Hesione, the sister of Priam, | Paris would have never come to plunder, | and to shame us in such a disastrous way.

Achilles's words provoke the angry reaction of the other Greeks, who claim the exact opposite: it is for their honour that they participate in this war, and if they give up now they will be dishonoured. Feeling insulted by the Greeks' disrespectful behaviour towards him, the angry Achilles decides to abandon the war so that they might realize his military value and the truth of his words.

For over six months, Achilles and his soldiers stay away from battle. Without their help, the Greeks are about to lose the war. In their attempt to regain Achilles's friendship and assistance, the Greeks show their respect to the hero and acknowledge his bravery. As a result, Achilles's anger is softened. He sends his soldiers to the Greeks' aid, but he does not return to the battle because he does not want to break the oath he has given to the Trojans. Eventually, Achilles's loss of honour through the devastation of his army, the Myrmidons, forces him to go back to the war. Of course, the

[20] *War of Troy* 7937–43, 7952–8 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys).

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restoration of Achilles's relationship with the Greeks also results in the destruction of his alliance with the Trojans, who are now pursuing vengeance.

The second and last Greek conflict over Helen occurs when Agamemnon divides the booty – including the women of Priam's house – after the second sack of Troy. At this point, all the Greeks – apart from Agamemnon and Menelaos – want to have Helen killed. The tension is finally solved through the intervention of Odysseus, who convinces the army to spare Helen and to give her back to Menelaos. Odysseus's move reinforces his relationship with the Atreidae, who in turn offer him as a counter-gift the Pelladion, the cult image of Troy that is supposed to be one of the battle prizes given to the bravest warrior. This act meets resistance from the rest of the army, who feel that Ajax deserved it. Thus Odysseus's transaction with the Atreidae both strengthens and loosens male bonds among the Greeks.

The Trojans' major conflict about Helen, unlike that of the Greeks, is never solved, and as a result it leads to a civil war that causes the end of Priam's era and the complete destruction of Troy. All starts when Aineias, Antenor, Achisis and Polydamas, the remaining four important Trojan warriors, try to persuade Priam to offer friendship and alliance to the Greeks by returning Helen. As is the case with Achilles described earlier, the four heroes' words result in an angry reaction from Amphimachos and Priam, who treat the proposal as dishonourable. Fearing treachery, Priam plans to kill them, but his plot is revealed. Priam's hostility drives them to make a pact with the Greeks. They offer to help the Greeks to capture Troy and they ask to have their lives and properties spared in return.

All in all, the *War of Troy*'s male homosocial relationships run parallel within the two camps, reflecting exactly the same male mentalities. Greeks and Trojans have the same ideals and attitudes. The narrator describes first the situation in the one camp and then goes on to present that of the other, often presenting the one as the result of the other and vice versa. His choice to move the narration from one camp to the other in order to cover the relationships within and between the two sites is, of course, reflected in the poem's length.

As the above outlined presentation of some of the work's most significant male relationships shows, women structure the dynamics of male homosocial desire. Women function as both the pawns of male bonds and the scapegoats for their *broken* alliances. In addition, women become the reason for the narration of men's relationships and exploits, and in effect they are the motive for writing a poem celebrating male ethics. It is to

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female homosociality that the remaining part of this chapter will now turn, which further supports the poem's predominant masculine and homophobic world.

Between Women

Helen, who is much cursed by both Greek and Trojan warriors, is not rejected by the women of Priam's family, who are attached to her. In fact, Helen has an honourable place in the female relationships of the poem. Apart from Kassandra, who is shut up in a tower because of her negative prophecies and opposition to her father's decisions, all the women of Priam's palace come together to watch their men while fighting, and to comment on their military competences or weaknesses. Indeed, Helen stands in the middle of them all:

> Αἱ ἀρχόντισσες ἀνέβησαν ἐπάνω εἰς τὰς φανέστρας,
> νὰ βλέπουσι τὸν πόλεμον. Μεγάλον φόβον εἶχεν
> ἡ Ἑλένη, ὁποὺ ἔλαμπεν ἡ πλάτσα ὅλη ἀπ' αὔτην.
> . . .
> Εἰς τὸ πλευρὸν τῆς ἔκραξε πάλιν τὴν Πολυξένην,
> ὁποὺ ἦτον τόσα εὔμορφη ὡσὰν καὶ τὴν Ἑλένην.
> Ἡ μία τὴν ἄλλην ἔλεγε: "Βλέπεις ἐκεῖ τὸν Πάριν;
> Ἐκεῖ πάλιν ὁ Ἕκτορας, Πολυδαμᾶς ἐδῶθεν,
> ὁποὺ ἀπεδὰ πλησιάζουσι νὰ σμίξουν καὶ νὰ δώσουν.
> Βλέπε πῶς τοῦ καθέζεται τὸ ἔλμον εἰς τὸ κεφάλιν!
> Ἐδῶθεν πάλε ὁ Τρώιλος μὲ τὸ καλὸν ἀλλάγιν.
> Πόσα κονταροκρούσματα θέλουσι τώρα γένει!
> Καλὰ τυγχαίνει νὰ ἔχωμεν μέγαν φόβον καὶ δεῖλος,
> ἐπεὶ τῆς ζωῆς μας τὴν χαρὰν ἐβλέπομεν ὀμπρός μας,
> ὅτι εἰς τὸ ζύγιν κρέμεται καὶ εἰς τὸν τροχὸν γυρίζει".
> Εἶθ' οὕτως πᾶσαι προσευχὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεούς τους κάμνουν
> διὰ νὰ τοὺς βοηθήσουσι καὶ διὰ νὰ τοὺς φυλάττουν.[21]

The noble women went up to the (palace's) openings, | to see the war. Helen had a great fear, | the whole place was shining because of her presence. | . . . | She summoned again Polyxena next to her, | who was as beautiful as Helen. | The one was saying to the other: 'Do you see Paris there? | There is Hector again, Polydamas (is) over here', | from this place they approach (the enemies) to confront and attack (them) | See how the helmet stands on his head! | Here again is Troilus in good attire. | How many blows with the spears will be now exchanged! | We should now share a great fear and wavering, | since the happiness of our lives lies ahead of us, | it hangs on the scale and it turns on the wheel.' | For

[21] *War of Troy* 4392–4, 4395–408 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys).

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these reasons all of them (women) pray to their Gods | to help them (Trojan warriors) and to protect them.

When they see their men in danger, the Trojan women are further bonded in prayer for their warriors. The women's spectatorship and prayers function as forms of support for the Trojan men in their difficult and long fight against the Greeks. After each battle, the Trojan women cooperate in taking care of the heroes' wounds, and often their beauty is highlighted when they are looking after and serving their men. Evidently, Trojan men are attended not just by loving, but also by extremely beautiful women, who along with the exceptionally nice and artful rooms of Priam's palace beautify the warriors' dangerous and painful lives:

> Εἰς τὴν τσάμπραν τὴν θαυμαστὴν πάσης εὐφροσύνης,
> ἐκεῖ ἐκοιμᾶτον Ἕκτορας ἕως ὅτου νὰ ὑγιάνῃ.
> . . .
> Ἡ Πολυξένη ἡ θαυμαστὴ μετὰ τῆς κυρὰ Ἑλένης,
> ἐκεῖνες τὸν ἐδούλευαν, ἔπλεναν τὴν πληγήν του,
> ὁποὺ τὰ δάκρυα ἐτρέχασιν ἀπὸ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς των·
> τινὰς τὴν εὐμορφότερην οὐκ ἠμπορεῖ ἐκλέξει
> ἀπὸ τὰς δύο τὰς ἔμνοστας, ποίαν νὰ εἴπῃ κάλλια.[22]

In the *wonderful* and full of pleasure bedroom, | Hector was sleeping until he would get well. | . . . | The *wonderful* Polyxena with lady Helen | were serving him, washing his wound, | on which the tears of their eyes were dropping. | No one could choose the most beautiful between them, | (no one) to tell who is the best between the two beauties. [emphasis added]

The most spectacular presence of the poem's female homosociality appears during the rites of the heroes' funerals, when the women of Priam's family are unified in their loud lamentations that evoke a responsive mourning from the bystanders. The women's sorrow and grief become wilder and more insistent as the poem progresses and as the heroes are killed one after another. Of course, men also weep at the loss of important heroes, but women's sorrow and grief take priority. Thus while the poem's heroes compete with each other in fighting, its heroines compete with each other in mourning.

The female bonds that are activated outside battle relieve the tension of war and provide a needed change from a world of male violence and anger to a peaceful world in which other human – or rather female – emotions such as affection, empathy, pity and sorrow reign. But female

[22] *War of Troy* 6278–9, 6283–7 (Papathomopoulos and Jeffreys).

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homosociality is not just a digression from war scenes; it operates as a narrative device to delay the narrative progression. As such, it has the opposite narrative function of male homosociality, which, as shown before, is strongly associated with initiatives and actions that promote the plot, a plot that could be rightly called 'male', since it is determined by male actions advancing male desires in a male war story. Female homosociality, on the other hand, is related to a passivity that suspends the unfolding of the plot.

Male homosociality in the *War of Troy* and its female counterpart stand for the two contradictory impulses of narrative desire: to drive forward to the ending and to pause in metaphor and subplot. The oscillation between the two produces what Peter Brooks calls the narrative 'squiggle': that is 'the arbitrary, transgressive, gratuitous line of narrative, its deviance from the straight line, the shortest distance between beginning and end – which would be the collapse of one into the other'.[23] Brooks explains the erotic nature of narrative delay in this way: 'We emerge from reading [Freud's] *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* with a dynamic model that structures ends . . . against beginnings . . . in a manner that necessitates the middle as detour, as struggle toward the end under the compulsion of imposed delay'.[24] While female homosociality in the *World of Troy* is the servant of its male counterpart, in the narrative economy they are two devices playing an equally important role: they contribute to the narrative's unity that is the result of juxtaposition between progression and digression.

Conclusion

In the preceding analysis, Sedgwick's concept of male homosocial desire has been employed to provide a literary reading of the rarely studied anonymous *War of Troy*, which, like the *Roman de Troie* and both texts' Homeric predecessor, celebrates male ethics and ideologies. A comparative examination of the *War of Troy* and Benoît de Sainte-Maure's work, which could not be undertaken here, would reveal not only how the anonymous poet reworks his model, but also to what extent the male world of the Greek poem reflects the cultural milieu where it was composed.[25] As has been shown here, the *War of Troy* can be better understood if its male and female worlds are taken into consideration. Of course, such an argument is valid also for both the *Roman de Troie* and other

[23] Brooks 1984: 104. [24] Brooks 1984: 107.
[25] For the cultural milieu of the *War of Troy*, see Chapter 8 in the present volume.

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Palaiologan romances in which similar ideologies and positions about men and women can be detected.[26] Concerning the *War of Troy* in particular, as has been demonstrated, male homosociality in its various forms, such as friendship, rivalry and enmity, is determined through the use of women, while female bonds are created to support those of male warriors. In examining the most significant male and female homosocial communities of the *War of Troy* and their characteristics, I have also attempted to show their key importance for both the shaping of the text's plot and the understanding of its poetics. From a narrative point of view, male homosociality is the dynamic force promoting the development of the plot while its female counterpart is the passivity that delays the plot. But the very narrative function of each gender's homosociality is unavoidably a mirror of the two genders' social function in a patriarchal society: men represent activity while women stand for passivity.

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[26] See, for example, Garland 1990, Mackridge 1992, 1993, Laiou 1993, Burton 2000 and Moore 2014.

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CHAPTER 13

Literary Landscapes in the Palaiologan Romances
An Ecocritical Approach

Kirsty Stewart

Landscapes in literature form a backdrop to the events of a story, adding a particular atmosphere, and forewarning readers as to the characters they are likely to encounter. This was as true of landscapes in Byzantine literature as it is of modern literature. This chapter will utilize a modern literary theory, ecocriticism, and primarily the branch known as ecofeminism, to examine the presentation of landscapes, and particularly the women within them, in four of the Palaiologan romances: *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, *Livistros and Rhodamne*, and the *Tale of Achilles*.

An Ecocritical and Ecofeminist Approach

Ecocriticism as a theory first appeared in the late 1960s and 1970s, becoming more popular in the 1990s, and has since been applied to a wider and wider range of cultural expression, from text, to art, to film and beyond.[1] The theory itself is hard to define, in part because of its relevance to such diverse fields. Cheryll Glotfelty has succinctly described the ecocritical approach at its most basic as 'the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment'.[2] Such a definition allows this theory to be broadly applicable across genres, periods and cultures. Indeed, in the introduction to her book *Greenery: Ecocritical Readings of Late Medieval English Literature*, Gillian Rudd states that ecocriticism 'cannot be a school that seeks to create and maintain a single, uniform outlook. Central to ecological thinking in general is a recognition of the importance of diversity – of species, of environments and even of approach.'[3] Here I will apply the general idea of ecocriticism as 'the study of the relationship of the human to the

[1] For further information on the theory as applied to modern literature, see Garrard 2012 and 2014.
[2] Glotfelty and Fromm 1996: xviii. [3] Rudd 2007: 3–4.

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non-human, throughout human cultural history' in combination with ecofeminism.[4] Ecofeminism is interested in the gendering of nature and the perceived oppression of both women and the environment by a male-dominated society. It deals with the imagery of the earth as nurturer and mother, as a symbol of beauty and fertility, and as something which is controlled, used and harmed, regardless of the more positive imagery. In part, ecofeminism seeks to nuance discussion of the relationship between humanity and nature, to take into account the fact that, by virtue of gender, as well as race, social class, religion and other features, certain sections of society have perceived and dealt with nature in different ways. Ecofeminism does not only deal with the feminine experience of nature, but balances it with a critique of the masculine experience and attempts to reach an objective presentation. Ecofeminist approaches to landscape, in studies of early modern literature at least, tend to fall into one of two groups, presenting women reclaiming their natural descriptions as a space for power and positivity, or as a negative comparison presenting them only as objects of pleasure or fear.[5] Arguably, both concepts are present in the Palaiologan texts. By focusing on the negative and positive presentation of female characters in connection with specific landscapes, I intend to present a more three-dimensional image of these women, and to highlight the role of the feminine within these texts.

Landscapes from the perspective of this chapter will largely mean the natural world, as opposed to the castles which appear in the romances. The motif of the castle has been considered in depth by others, and though it will form a point of contrast here, being the archetype of a male-dominated 'landscape', it will be the gardens connected with such buildings which form the main argument, in conjunction with the more extreme, wilderness, landscapes.[6] In part this is because of the significant presence of gardens in the Palaiologan romances, and in part because of the cultural value of gardens in Byzantium more broadly, as places 'for reflection and beauty, but also . . . order, harmony and safety', suggesting heavenly paradise, political stability and the joys of life.[7]

[4] Garrard 2012: 5.
[5] For examples of the positive reclaiming of natural imagery, see Blair 2002 and Ruether 1992. For the use of nature solely to objectify see Rose 1994 and Merchant 1996.
[6] See for example Cupane 1983. [7] Nilsson 2013: 17–18.

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Ecophobia in the Palaiologan Romances

Let us begin with the negative presentation of feminine nature. Although less overt than the use of woodland in western romances such as those by Chrétien de Troyes, the wild landscape is still concomitant with the more feral and violent aspects of society, and in particular with witches. This connection between nature and discomfort or fear has been termed ecophobia.[8] When combined with depictions of women, this ecophobia presents a very negative picture of the feminine. This is exemplified in the romances by the character of the witch. The witch in *Livistros and Rhodamne*, although initially encountered in a meadow, tells her story to Livistros and Klitovon in 'a lonely place on the coast with some fearsome crags on the water's edge' (εἰς γῆν παραθαλάσσιον, εἰς τόπον μοναξίας, | εἰς γῆν, εἰς βράχη φοβερὰ καὶ εἰς ὄχθον τῆς θαλάσσης) where she had been left by Verderichos, the prince of Egypt who had used her to capture Rhodamne.[9] Black and naked as the landscape around her, this unpleasant creature is made the more so due to her situation, and yet we are to feel little sympathy for her. The landscape appears as an ekphrasis of her personality, but is one in which she has no real power, in contrast to the heroines and their gardens. Although she is able to help Livistros reclaim Rhodamne, and does so, she is nevertheless summarily killed by Livistros.

In *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, although we first encounter the witch at the palace of the foreign king, her main role occurs in the landscape surrounding the Dragon's Castle, specifically the woodland close to a small island garden. She is cursed as 'you foul, black baggage, you accursed mother of devils' (Εἰπέ, τὴν λέγει, μυσαρά, σκεῦος μελανωμένον, | ἠσβολωμένη καὶ κακὴ καὶ τῶν δαιμόνων μήτηρ) and derided for creating an apple which not only killed Kallimachos, but was also used to revive him.[10] In so doing, she saved the protagonists, but is burned without being given the opportunity to defend herself, apparently as part of the king's humanity in releasing Chrysorrhoe and a reflection of his own subsequent grief.

As witches, these characters have power over the natural world itself. The creation of an apple to kill but also to revive, and of flying horses to cross the sea, mean that these women undermine the natural order, making them as dangerous as the border areas in which they are encountered. When these women and their powers over nature are used by powerful men for their own aims, they are to some extent 'safe'. When they have fulfilled their

[8] Estok 2011: 2. [9] *Livistros and Rhodamne* **α** 2871–2 (Agapitos); trans. Betts 1995: 151.
[10] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 2578–9, 2580–1 (Pichard); trans. Betts 1995: 87.

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purpose, 'they are summarily blamed and discarded', and being outside of male control, become a threat.[11] Conversely, they cannot apparently use their powers to protect themselves, and are violently killed in either the male sphere of the castle or in the wilderness itself.[12] The presentation of both these women draws on the fear of landscapes dangerously outside of mankind's control, the forest and the harsh scenery of the seascape. Neither of these spaces is entirely safe, containing dangerous animals, outlaws and other threats as they exist outside the bounds of society. The witches, with their magic, also exist outside of social, even natural, laws and thus come across as threatening, regardless of their actual behaviour.

Natural Beauty

The connection between feminine power over nature, and fear of both women and nature, is just one way in which the feminine is presented in these romances. The heroines of these stories contrast strongly with their aged, powerful, and yet powerless, counterparts. However, from the perspective of ecofeminism, the heroines also suffer from a 'negative' depiction; being objectified as a thing of pleasure in the same way as the landscapes around them.

The heroines of the Palaiologan romances are most frequently encountered in gardens, cultivated areas of beauty, pleasure and relaxation. The garden as a place of pleasure and harmony is a common motif in Byzantine literature, and one which is present in the earlier Byzantine romances, such as the Komnenian novel *Hysmine and Hysminias* by Eumathios Makrembolites, in which the garden is a setting for celebrations, feasts and flirting.[13] Gardens are also areas which appear to fall within social laws, being owned, cultivated and connected to male-dominated dwellings such as castles, and subject to certain social, and literary, ideas and expectations.[14] The gardens described in *Velthandros and, Chrysantza*, *Kallimachos and, Chrysorrhoe*, *Livistros and Rhodamne* and

[11] Goldwyn 2015: 71. [12] Goldwyn 2015: 71–2.

[13] In *Hysmine and Hysminias* we first encounter Hysmine in her father's garden, and it is here that she begins her flirtation. It is also in the garden that Hysminias first attempts to make love to Hysmine but is prevented. Artistic images within the garden also serve to initiate Hysminias in the ways of loving, indicating who Eros is and how inescapable his power. For a full discussion of the forty-three manuscripts which preserve this novel, see Cataldi Palau 1980. A number of editions of the novel appeared during the nineteenth century and earlier; Conca's edition of 2001 included all four Komnenian novels, for which a new translation has been produced by Jeffreys 2012. For more detailed discussion of *Hysmine and Hysminias*, see Alexiou 1977, Nilsson 2001 and Magdalino 1992.

[14] The roles of the garden in Byzantine literature have recently been discussed by Nilsson 2013.

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the *Tale of Achilles* vary in size and style, but retain similar features. Some of the gardens described in these romances are quite large and lavish, like the garden area attached to Eros's castle in *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, others consist of little more than a small courtyard, such as the internal garden of the Silver Castle in *Livistros and Rhodamne*. The descriptions differ but usually include shady trees, under which the lovers can meet, as well as flowers and fruit, all in timeless full bloom.[15] Other than specific references to roses and lilies, the types of plants in the gardens are largely left up to the imagination. This is similar to the treatment of gardens in the ancient Greek novels, described as paradises with many flowers, with those actually named including roses and lilies, as well as violets, hyacinths and narcissus.[16] In the larger gardens we are given more idea of space; for example, the garden of Eros in *Velthandros* has a beautiful terrace.[17] All feature at least one man-made object, usually a fountain, and are quiet, and reasonably private, spaces. They are also so beautiful as to be beyond the description of the pen, with authorial interventions designed to stress the beauty of the space without going into exhaustive detail.[18] What detail we are given is, however, directly reflected in the descriptions of the heroines.

The description of the heroine usually comes within a few lines of a description of a garden and is as full of natural imagery and concepts of art and artifice. Such depiction follows on from the natural imagery used in the descriptions of heroines and heroes in the earlier novels of the Second Sophistic and the Komnenian period. For example, in Longus's novel, *Daphnis and Chloe*, Chloe's lips 'are softer than rose petals' and she herself compares 'Daphnis' hair to myrtle berries because it was black, and he compared her face to an apple because it was fair and pink' (καὶ ἡ μὲν εἴκασεν αὐτοῦ τὴν κόμην, ὅτι μέλαινα, μύρτοις, ὁ δὲ μήλῳ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς, ὅτι λευκὸν καὶ ἐνερευθές ἦν).[19] In the Komnenian novels, Hysmine has lips tinted red so that on sight 'you would say that the girl had crushed a rose with her lips' (εἴπος ἰδων ῥόδον ἐκθλῖψαι τὴν κόρην τοῖς χείλεσι).[20] Drosilla's face is like a meadow, with the narcissus and rose in her

[15] This reflects the paradisiacal nature of the gardens as well as the youth of those within them. It is a common feature of garden descriptions, not only due to the biblical Eden but also the ever-fruitful gardens at Alcinous described by Homer.

[16] Zeitlin 1990: 445–6, Nilsson 2001: 97, Littlewood and von Stradelberg 2013.

[17] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 474 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 13.

[18] For example, line 490 of the *Achilleis byzantina* (e cod. Brit. Mus. addit. 8241): καὶ ποῖος νοῦς νὰ δυναστῆ καθάρια νὰ τὸ εἰπῆ;

[19] Longus, *Daphnis & Chloe* 1.24.3. See also 1.18.1: Χείλη μὲν ῥόδων ἁπαλώτερα.

[20] Eumathios Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias* 3.6.4 (Conca); trans. Jeffreys 2012: 196–7.

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complexion, violet-like eyes and ivy-like hair.[21] Rhodanthe is not only well-formed in the image of Artemis but her 'flesh mimicked white snow' (μίμημα λευκῆς χιόνος το σαρκίον), and she resembled the clinging vine and cypress tree (ὡς ἀναδενδράς, ὡς κυπάριττος νέα).[22] Adam Goldwyn has analysed the image of both hero and heroine in Byzantine romance fiction, specifically in *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, and in the epic *Digenis Akritis*.[23] His research also highlights the floral imagery in depictions of women, and emphasizes that this is most prevalent once they are in a relationship with the hero. Prior to that point, the hero and heroine are presented in more zoomorphic terms as hunter and prey, a dichotomy which, as Goldwyn indicates, is entirely unsuitable for 'depicting the long-term nature of marriage'.[24]

The Palaiologan authors continue to describe heroines using floral imagery, though the hunter–prey imagery of the earlier romances seems less prevalent. Instead, the Palaiologan authors depict the garden and the heroine so that 'the beauty of the one reflects and augments that of the other' from the beginning of relationship.[25] When Velthandros describes Chrysantza to Eros as the winner of the beauty contest he says: 'Her cheeks are rose-red, her lips have the colour of nature. Certainly, her mouth is perfumed' (μάγουλα ῥοδοκόκκινα, αὐτόβαπτα τὰ χείλη. | ἐμύριζε τὸ στόμαν της χωρίς ἀμφιβολίας).[26] Chrysantza's neck is also described as 'from a lathe' (τράχηλος τουρνεμένος), as were the trees he saw earlier in Eros's garden, so that she too is so naturally beautiful as to appear to be a work of art.[27] The unnamed heroine in the *Tale of Achilles* is described as having red lips, a neck white as crystal, pale skin with rose-coloured cheeks and a spring-like mouth.[28] She even goes so far as to express her wish to become a tree in the garden, and in the same song identifies herself with the various delightful sights and smells of the garden.[29]

The *ekphrasis* of Chrysorrhoe occurs after she has bathed and recovered from her ordeal of torture. We are told that:

> Βοστρύχους εἶχεν ποταμούς, ἐρωτικοὺς πλοκάμους· | εἶχεν ὁ βόστρυχος αὐγὴν εἰς κεφαλὴν τῆς κόρης, | ἀπέστιλβεν ὑπὲρ χρυσῆν ἀκτῖναν τοῦ

[21] Niketas Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles* 4.125–30 (Conca); trans. Jeffreys 2012: 390.
[22] Theodore Prodromos, *Rodanthe and Dosikles* (Conca) 1.42 and 2.209; trans. Jeffreys 2012: 21 and 42.
[23] Goldwyn 2015. [24] Goldwyn 2015: 228. [25] Littlewood 1979: 99.
[26] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 703–4 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 18.
[27] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 706 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 18, reflecting *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 290 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 10.
[28] *Tale of Achilles* 872–77 (Smith). [29] *Tale of Achilles* 1042–56 (Smith).

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> ἡλίου. | Σῶμα λευκὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν τὴν τοῦ κρυστάλλου φύσιν· | ὑπέκλεπτεν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τοῦ σώματος ἡ χάρις. | Ἐδόκει γὰρ σὺν τῷ λευκῷ καὶ ῥόδου χάριν ἔχειν.
>
> Her hair flowed down in rivers of lovely curls and shone on her head with a gleam which surpassed the golden rays of the sun. Her body, which was whiter than crystal, beguiled the sight with its beauty as it seemed to blend the charm of roses with its colour.[30]

Her golden hair is mirrored by the golden pavement in the bathhouse, and the golden tree and vine therein.[31] Chrysorrhoe's crystalline skin reminds us, too, of the roses and lilies that together form a curtain for the bathhouse.[32] The authorial exclamations questioning the ability to describe Chrysorrhoe's beauty also mimic those expressed by the author earlier in relation to the *ekphrasis* of the garden.[33] Not only is Chrysorrhoe's beauty likened to that of nature, it is specifically connected with the garden and bathhouse where she now is. The *ekphrasis* of Rhodamne is no less full of allusions to the beauty of nature but, in common with the others, the rose is central to her image: 'Her lips were red and thin, like a rose when it opens at dawn to receive the dew' (κόκκινα χείλη καὶ πτενά, τὸ κόκκινον ὡς ρόδον | ὅταν ἀνοίγει τὴν αὐγὴν νὰ δέξεται δροσίαν).[34] The rose which appears so prevalent in this imagery was sacred to Aphrodite, a connection certainly known to the Byzantines.[35] The connection between Aphrodite and the heroine is highlighted almost as often as the heroine's rose-like beauty; both the heroine in the *Tale of Achilles* and Chrysorrhoe are directly compared to the goddess.[36] This nature-like beauty consequently appears almost divine, and certainly ideal.

Such anthomorphic depictions of women are not limited to Greek literature by any means. Descriptions of heroines from western romances also utilize natural imagery in a similar manner to the Byzantine works.

[30] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 811–16 (Pichard); trans. Betts 1995: 53.
[31] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 800 (Pichard): τοῦ χρουσοῦ τὴν καλλονὴν τοῦ πάτου; 317: τὸν χρυσὸν εἰς δένδρον; and line 321: ὁ χρυσὸς ὡς ἄμπελος.
[32] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhose* 337–40 (Pichard): Εἰς δὲ καὶ πάλιν τοῦ λουτροῦ τὴν ἐνδοτέραν θύραν | βηλόθυρον ἐκρέμετο πρὸς τὸ λουτρὸν ἁρμόζον | Καὶ γὰρ ἦν τὸ βηλόθυρον κρίνων καὶ ῥόδων ἄνθη· | τῆς τέχνης τὸ παράξενον οὐ συνεχώρει βλέπειν.; trans. Betts 1995:43.
[33] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 295–7 (Pichard): Τί πρῶτον εἴπω τοῦ λουτροῦ, τί δὴ καὶ γράψω πρῶτον, | τὸ μῆκος τὴν λαμπρότηταν, τήν ἐκ τοῦ κάλλους χάριν | ἢ τὴν ὁλόφωτον αὐγὴν ἢ τῶν φυτῶν τὸ ξένον; and line 790: Τίς γοῦν <ποτε> καὶ ποταπὴ γλῶσσα τὴν χάριν εἴπῃ.
[34] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 2562–3 (Agapitos); trans. Betts 1995: 145.
[35] See, for example, the passage in *Geoponika* (Dalby 2011: 240), a compendium of agricultural and horticultural information assembled in the tenth century under the auspices of the emperor Constantine Porphyrogennetos.
[36] *Tale of Achilles* 857 (Smith) and *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 819 (Pichard).

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The comparison with flowers in particular is key. One example can be found in a work translated from Italian into Greek in the fourteenth century, *Florios and Platziaflora*. The heroine of this text, Blanchefleur or Platziaflora, is so called due to her resemblance to a dewy lily, and has the colour of roses and lilies in her appearance.[37] This is very similar to the imagery and naming of Byzantine heroines, such as Rhodamne who is literally 'rosy-hued'. A slightly later western example can be found in Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale*, whose heroine, Emelye, is described indirectly as rivalling the flowers of May, being fairer than the lily and blushing like the rose, so that we 'do not see Emelye as a person, but as another flower to grace the garden'.[38] The descriptions of the Palaiologan heroines, though they utilize floral imagery in a similar way, extend the imagery to include the artistry of the garden and its adornments, such as the golden tree in *Kallimachos.*

The Heroine in the Garden

By describing the heroines shortly after the ekphraseis of the gardens, and in parallel terms, the authors of these works present them as being so beautiful as to rival nature, and not just nature, but cultivated nature. In the Byzantine imagination, as in the classical, cultivated nature was considered far more beautiful than untamed nature, so that '(w)ith their enclosed and irrigated orchard, vineyard, and orderly rows of greens, the storied gardens of Alcinous (Od. 7.112–32) outshone the flourishing grove, vine, and soft flowery meadows of Calypso's island (Od. 5.63–74)'.[39] These two settings became contrasting points of reference for writers depicting fertile landscapes, the one being clearly favoured over the other. When nature is cultivated and controlled, it is no longer dangerous. It becomes something to be owned and enjoyed, and it is this concept which can be negatively highlighted in the depiction of the heroines. They too now become objects to be viewed, but also to be tended and cultivated in the manner of a plant, to be cared for by a civilizing, masculine, presence. The heroine can thus be presented as being tended by her 'gardener' lover. In *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* this concept is made manifest:

[37] *Florios and Platziaflora* 148–53 (Ortolá Salas): τὴν κόρην τὴν ἐξαίρετοω ἐκάλει Πλατζια Φλώρε, | διατὶ ἦταν ἀνθόμοια τοῦ δροσεροῦ τοῦ κρίνου· | καὶ τὸ καθὲν τὴν θεωριὰν εἶχεν ἀπὸ τὴν ὄψιν. | Ὥσπερ τὸ ρόδον ἄσπρον ἔν᾿καὶ κόκκινον ὡραῖον, | οὕτως τὸ κάλλον ἔπλασεν ἡ φύσις καὶ τῶν δύο· | κρινοτριανταφυλλόρροδα. See also *Florio e Plaziaflore* pages 472–5 (Cupane).

[38] Douglass 1998: 153; Chaucer, *Knight's Tale* 1035–50 (Benson).

[39] Rodgers 2002: 169.

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> Αὐθέντης εἶσαι τῶν φυτῶν, ἐγὼ τοῦ κήπου φύλαξ. | Ἂν πέσῃς εἰς τὸ στρῶμάν σου βασιλικῶς ἐπάνω, | παραμονὴν τὸν μισθαργὸν καὶ φύλαξιν εὑρήσεις | καὶ τρυγητὴν τῶν ῥόδων σου καὶ τῶν φυτῶν δραγάτην.

> You are the ruler of the plants and I am the protector of the garden. When you go to bed as queen you will have your labourer to protect and defend you. He will also pick your roses and tend your plants.[40]

Kallimachos has at this point taken on the role of gardener within the palace where Chrysorrhoe is confined. This portrayal of Kallimachos as gardener, both in occupation and love, adds to the symbolic act of 'watering' Chrysorrhoe, extending the connection of the heroine to the garden through vegetal imagery.

This presentation of the heroine as a plant to be tended by her 'gardener' is present in earlier material, and is particularly obvious in *Digenis Akritis*. When Digenis and his new wife settle in the border area, he creates a garden space for her and begins to describe her in traditional floral terms. However, the garden space is essentially a meadow, which is not enclosed, and although Digenis pitches a tent there and makes it habitable, it is not without danger. Indeed, a few lines after the description of her beauty, a serpent disguised as a good-looking boy attempts to rape the girl.[41] Goldwyn argues that Digenis's actions and language in relation to his wife allow him to position himself 'as a man, a ruler, a husband, and a gardener, as having power of her', and a need to protect her.[42] Goldwyn goes on to discuss the analogy of a properly tended garden as a good marriage, contrasting it with abandonment of another woman in the *Digenis* cycle, who is left in the desert by her lover and says that she has 'withered before time like a newly planted tree' (καὶ ὡς δένδρον νεόφυτον πρὸ καιροῦ ξηρανθεῖσα).[43] Importantly, the 'cultivation' of the heroine is good for the relationship, as well as for the hero and heroine individually. Goldwyn even goes so far as to suggest that 'it is the husband's job to protect the sexual and emotional *agency* of his wife'.[44]

Although the couples in the Palaiologan romances are not married in any formal sense, they nevertheless use this concept. Indeed, Chrysorrhoe deliberately presents herself as a plant with an attentive gardener. After her abduction and subsequent reuniting with Kallimachos, the pair are discovered together in the garden and brought before her abductor. It is

[40] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 2084–7 (Pichard); trans. Betts 1995: 78.
[41] *Digenis Akritis* 6.47–55 (Jeffreys). [42] Goldwyn 2015: 228.
[43] Goldwyn 2015: 228–9; *Digenis Akritis* 5.176 (Jeffreys). [44] Goldwyn 2015: 228, my italics.

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Chrysorrhoe and not Kallimachos who steps forth to defend their actions through use of an allegory:

> Ἂν ἐξ οἰκείων τῶν χειρῶν φυτεύσῃ τις ἀμπέλιν | καὶ σκάψῃ καὶ κλαδεύσῃ το, φράξῃ τὸν γῦρον ὅλον, | βλαστολογήσῃ το καλὰ καὶ δραγατσύσῃ τοῦτο | καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν στήκεται μὲ τὴν σφενδόνην πᾶσαν, | νὰ φοβερίζῃ τὰ πτηνὰ νὰ μὴ τὸ καταλοῦσιν, | τὴν νύκταν πάλιν περπατῇ τὸν γῦρον καὶ φυλάσσῃ, | κακοπαθῇ καὶ δέρνεται, καὶ τὸν καιπὸν τοῦ τρύγους | ἔλθῃ καὶ δυναστεύσῃ το ἄλλος νὰ τὸ ἐπάρῃ.
>
> A man plants a vine with his own hands, hoes it, prunes it, puts a fence around it, weeds it carefully, tends it, spends the whole day with a sling frightening away birds who wish to destroy it, walks around by night to guard it. He suffers hardship and agony. At harvest time another man comes and seizes possession of it for himself.[45]

She then asks the king whether the first or the second man should be allowed to enjoy the vine, and when the king states that it belongs to the first man, she identifies Kallimachos as the man he had killed by magic in order to abduct her, and asks 'Whom did he wrong in enjoying the fruits of his labour?' (Τίνα λοιπὸν ἠδίκησεν, νὰ φὰ τὸν κάματόν του;).[46] In doing so she clearly implies that she herself is the vine and the 'fruit' of the vine is sexual intimacy. In using vegetal imagery of herself, Chrysorrhoe appears to accept that she must be tended like a plant, and that she is something which can be owned, but also that she has an element of choice in this ownership, preferring a careful gardener to a thief. Goldwyn extends this concept of a careful gardener to be reflective of proper behaviour towards one's wife, which certainly seems to be what Chrysorrhoe is implying, regardless of her legal marital situation.[47]

A similar idea is presented in the *Tale of Achilles*. Chrysorrhoe uses the phrase νὰ τὸ τρυγήσῃ to describe the harvesting, or possibly stripping of the vine, representing herself. The heroine in the *Tale of Achilles* uses the same word, τρυγήσῃ, when she sings of not wanting to bow to love or the nobleman, Achilles, who wishes to reap her garden.[48] Achilles uses the word in his love song to the girl, compounding the imagery.[49] As Goldwyn puts it in relation to the Komnenian *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 'both women and crop are to be taken from their wild, uncontrolled state to one under male domination', though it should be remembered that in

[45] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 2457–64 (Pichard); trans. Betts 1995: 85.
[46] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 2483 (Pichard). [47] Goldwyn 2015: 228–9.
[48] *Tale of Achilles* 1050 (Smith): Βούλεται κάτις εὐγενής, ζητεῖ νὰ τὸ τρυγήσῃ.
[49] *Tale of Achilles* 1306 (Smith): καὶ δός με ἀπὲ τοῦ κήπου σου μηλέα νὰ τὴν τρυγήσω.

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the Palaiologan works, the heroine is already situated in her own garden space, if as yet untended.[50]

Erotic Nature

The imagery of the tended and harvested vine, along with a number of other aspects of the garden, has led to scholars looking at the development of the relationship between the garden and the heroine in a more erotic sense. Nilsson says of the Komnenian novels, 'the enclosed beauty of the garden seems to represent the maiden's chastity and virginity', and entry into the garden seems to indicate sexual conquest, an image which is equally apparent in the Palaiologan works.[51] After all, walls limit access both to the gardens and to the people connected with them, either Eros or the heroine. This sense of enclosure is an important aspect of the gardens described. Nature itself is really outside of society, a wilderness, a place of chaos outwith normal social conventions. By enclosing the garden within walls and connecting it to the castle or walled town the author brings untamed nature into society and the care of a gardener, while creating an area at least partially free from normal social conventions, being in essence a private space.[52] Walled gardens are designed to provide a good environment for the plants we choose, while excluding unwanted plants, seen as weeds.[53] To an extent this concept is visible in the exclusion, or at least attempted exclusion, of outsiders from the gardens described.

Decorated walls can add further to the erotic understanding of the garden. This is most obviously the case in *Livistros*, where the walls of the Silver Castle, the home of Rhodamne and her parents, are richly ornamented with depictions of the virtues, the twelve months and the Ἐρωτόπουλα, the erotic virtues.[54] Like the garden walls in *Hysmine and Hysminias*, these decorated walls are part of the hero's erotic awakening. Here they appear after Livistros has been enslaved by Eros, and they do not connect directly with the garden, or the heroine, although her bedchamber is referenced immediately after the walls. Although they are therefore the most splendid of the walls described in the romances, their role is slightly different, as the hero does not need to overcome them directly, instead entering the castle as Rhodamne's accepted husband,

[50] Goldwyn 2015: 230. [51] Nilsson 2001: 98. [52] Agapitos and Smith 1992: 85–6.
[53] Rudd 2007: 165. [54] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 1022–249 (Agapitos); trans. Betts 1995: 114–19.

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after victory in combat.[55] The decorative and interpretive function of the walls in the other romances remains secondary to the role of the wall as a physical barrier. Entry in to the gardens through these gated walls certainly initiates the romantic aspect of these stories, and often initiates the hero and heroine in the ways of love, whether overtly erotic or otherwise. As much is hinted at in the words inscribed at the entrance to Eros's castle in *Velthandros and Chrysantza*:

> Τὸν οὐκ ἐφθάσαντα ποτὲ τὰ βέλη τῶν Ἐρώτων | μυριοχιλιοκατάρδοτον εὐθὺς να τὸν ποιήσουν, | ὅστις τὸ Ἐρωτόκαστρον ἀπέσω να τὸν ἴδη.
>
> The man never touched by the shafts of the cupids will straightway be subjected to ten million woes by them when he sees Love's castle from the inside.[56]

As they usually connect the garden space with a castle, the walls can be seen as the protective construction of the heroine's parents, and primarily her father as the owner of the castle. These walls protect the heroine from the outside world, defending her virginity.[57] In the *Tale of Achilles*, the connection between the walls and the heroine's chastity is also made clear, as Achilles destroys the walls of the garden and the heroine's bedchamber after symbolically marrying her.[58] It is significant that the walls of the garden, the most vivid depiction of male power within them, are also an erotic symbol for the male characters. As noted in their descriptions of themselves, for the heroines, their plant-like, fertile nature is more significant in that sense.

Female Sexuality and the Garden

So far, the landscape-based depictions of the feminine in these romances have presented the female as something wild, powerful, and to be feared and destroyed, or as something beautiful when cultivated by her lover, to be viewed and enclosed. The opposing use of ecofeminism, which presents a positively powerful connection between women and the natural world hardly seems to be applicable. Indeed, when applied to modern literature

[55] For a full discussion of the imagery used in describing the walls, and its precedents, see Lendari 2007: 325–47 and Cupane 1992: 283–305.

[56] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 259–61 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 10.

[57] This concept of enclosed virginity is highlighted as an element of Byzantine garden symbolism in Nilsson 2013: 24.

[58] *Tale of Achilles* 1275–7 (Smith): Τὸ ἀπελατίκιν του ἔσυρεν τὸ ἐρωτικόν του ἐκεῖνο, | ἐτίναξεν τὸ χέριν του, κρούει το εἰς τὸ τεῖχος, | καὶ ἀπάνω κάτω ἐρράγισεν τῆς κόρης τὸ κουβοῦκλιν.

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this theory is most useful where the authors themselves are female. Although possible, it is unlikely that the authors of these Byzantine texts were women.[59] However, it is perfectly reasonable to assume that women formed part of their audience, or perhaps even commissioned the texts and patronized the authors, as they did in earlier periods, notably the late eleventh and twelfth century.[60] It is clear that some works of this nature did have a courtly audience consisting of both men and women.[61] It is therefore worth considering this more positive ecofeminist approach, even if the society which produced the texts may have privileged the masculine.

The garden is clearly a feminine space in that it is the main setting in which we encounter women, at least those who are desirable and socially acceptable. However, it is also in this space that the central characters engage in the socially unacceptable. Entrance into the garden of the lady creates a deeper connection between her and the hero and, although not married in any official sense, once the garden is entered, the question of a sexual relationship sometimes appears resolved. Achilles and his heroine refrain from consummating their relationship when alone in the garden together at night, the question of their relationship being postponed to the following night when she places a wreath of flowers from her garden on his head, which he accepts and kisses in a symbol of marriage. In the lines which follow he destroys the walls of the bed chamber, symbolizing the pair's sexual union. This event is followed by Achilles's abduction of the heroine and their subsequently approved and celebrated marriage.

Velthandros and Chrysantza kiss, embrace and gratify their desires in the garden, a discreet reference to their lovemaking, but only after Velthandros has confirmed that she is the girl to whom he gave Eros's wand as her prize for winning the beauty contest early in the story, itself a symbol of union.[62] The pair are officially married at the end of the story, once they have returned to the court of Velthandros's father.[63]

The erotically charged scene in the bathhouse in *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* is perhaps the most explicit, with Kallimachos reaping

[59] All are anonymous with the possible exception of *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* which has been attributed to Andronikos Palaiologos. For a discussion on the attribution of *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* to Andronikos Palaiologos, see Knös 1962, Betts 1995: 33 and Agapitos and Smith 1992: 55–6.

[60] Agapitos 2012: 241.

[61] For example, the audience to whom Klitovon narrates Livistros's story includes both men and women, Betts 1995: 95.

[62] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 854–68 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 20–1.

[63] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 1330–5 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 30.

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'the sweet fruits of pleasure. I mean something sweeter than everything sweetest.'[64] This scene also occurs after a symbolic wedding, in this case the exchange of vows, witnessed, at least figuratively by Eros himself.

It appears, then, that within the setting of the garden, the hero and heroine feel able to behave as though married. That is not to say that there are never consequences; Velthandros is after all caught and must marry Chrysantza's maid in order to stay near Chrysantza until the pair can escape together. This feature of the Palaiologan works differs considerably from the chastity tests of the Second Sophistic and Komnenian novels. It has been suggested that this is due to an increased western influence on the Palaiologan romances.[65] Another suggestion is that the morals of Byzantine society loosened in this period.[66] However, as has been pointed out by Agapitos, there is a disconnect between life and literature in the West during this period as well, and licentiousness in romances does not necessarily reflect daily practice.[67] Agapitos presents a number of examples from other sources to show that eroticism was not an uncommon feature of Byzantine literature from other periods.[68] In the Palaiologan romances, the erotic episodes do go a step further than their predecessors. If this is connected to western influence, the Byzantine heroines have considerably more autonomous involvement than the western heroines discussed below, such that a positive response to female sexuality may be posited. This would not seem completely outside the realms of possibility when considered in conjugation with the fertility imagery of the garden and its religious aspects as presented in the erotic imagery of the *Song of Songs*.

There is some suggestion that the style of the garden is representative not just of virginity, but of levels of sexuality.[69] A well-tended and neat garden can indicate acceptable affection, while the more sensual the description the more passionate the relationship, hence the flowers 'perfumed beyond nature' round the bathhouse in the Dragon's Castle and the subsequent fire of Chrysorrhoe's emotions.[70] This arguably connects with classical and Christian gardens; Marian imagery is tied in with

[64] *Kallimachos and Chrysorroe* 781–82 (Pichard): ἡδονῆς φύλλον γλυκὺν ἐτρύγα, | εἶπά τι καὶ γλυκύτερον πάντων τῶν γλυκυτέρων.; trans. Betts 1995: 52.
[65] Cupane 1986: 66–72. [66] Beck 1984: 183–8. [67] Agapitos 1990: 269.
[68] Agapitos 1990: 269–72.
[69] Littlewood 1979: 103; Barber 1992: 10–14. This concept is also highlighted in Nilsson 2013: 25–6. The imagery of heavily scented flowers, unfurling rose petals, heavy fruits and the enclosing walls of the garden themselves particularly lend themselves to such discussions.
[70] *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 298–9 (Pichard):"Απέσω γὰρ παρέκυπτεν εἰς τοῦ λουτροῦ τὸ πλάτος | ἀνθῶν καὶ φύλλων καὶ φυτῶν εὐώδης παρὰ φύσιν·; trans. Betts 1995: 42.

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fertile but immaculate nature, while the garden areas of Calypso and Circe are clearly erotic. Theodore Hyrtakenos's *ekphrasis* of St Anna's garden uses similar imagery, as Anna's pregnancy becomes reflected in her garden, after her barrenness has been contrasted with it. Mary-Lyon Dolezal and Maria Mavroudi have highlighted the many similarities between this text and the Palaiologan romances.[71] The *ekphrasis* of a garden in Hyrtakenos's text is very similar to those of the romances, beginning with the enclosing wall, discussing the various trees and plants in full, paradisiacal bloom, and often containing a long description of a fountain or other statuary. It does not appear to have mattered whether the text related to a love story or a spiritual one, the garden *topos* remained the same. Both could utilize concepts of fertility and the consummation of love, or a divinely granted pregnancy, within the enclosed space. The concept that the woman is made fertile by both the space around her and by masculine 'tending' in this text is reflected through the masculine involvement of God, though the garden space in Hyrtakenos's work remains Anna's space, a point of ownership which we will also see in the four romances discussed here.

It is worth noting the gendering and eroticizing of the garden landscape, connecting 'the land to pleasures of the human body *and* the human mind, does not necessarily entail or even enhance discourses of domination, control, and mastery of nature'.[72] The heroine and the garden, with all their natural beauty and sensuality, create not only a sense of pleasure but also of belonging. In his epigram on a poem by Andronikos Palaiologos, arguably identified as *Kallimachos*, the court poet Manuel Philes offers us a possible religious interpretation which enhances this sense presenting the romantic work as a spiritual allegory. For Philes, the hero's father symbolizes God, the heroine as the beloved represents the hero's soul, while the dragon killed by the hero is obviously an image of the Devil.[73] In describing the heroine as the hero's soul, the poet suggests a link between admiration for nature and appreciation of divine creation, with the feminine character, in a manner similar to that of the Theotokos, acting as the intermediary.[74] David Abram has argued that such depictions of nature are a positive thing, rather than being negative, as ecofeminism often perceives them.[75] Indeed, he argues that we need to reawaken a corporeal awareness of the natural world in order to regain the emotional, and even sexual, relationship with the world as presented in these romances. The mediatory role had previously been suggested in a feminist context by

[71] Dolezal and Mavroudi 2002. [72] Gersdorf 2000: 177. [73] Knös 1962: 274–95.
[74] Knös 1962: 286–7. [75] Abram 1996.

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Sherry B. Ortner in 1972.[76] Ortner analyses the relationship between women and nature in terms of oppression, opposing the male realm of 'culture' with the female sphere of 'nature'. Towards the end of her discussion she presents what Vakoch would call a 'liberatory ideal';[77] that women, as the key agents of socialization, and as being perceived as somewhere in the middle between nature and male transcendence of nature, act as a necessary intermediary, converting nature into culture.[78] The heroines of these romances settle the heroes in some sense, allowing them to find a sense of belonging.

The Garden as a Venue for Feminine Power

If we can allow the lovers some degree of freedom from social laws within the garden, it does not seem much of a stretch to assume we can find some bending of the gender-based social norms within this space as well. Returning to the concept of ownership and the enclosing walls of the garden, it is worth noting that entrance to the garden space is, to some extent, controlled by the heroine herself. Whereas in the ancient novels and the Komnenian works, the male characters walk freely in this space, now they only enter it in certain circumstances. The hero, being worthy of doing so, is able to enter the garden, but by implicit invitation. Velthandros only dares to enter Chrysantza's garden after hearing her say that she loves him, despite Eros's intervention two years previously.[79] After he is caught leaving her garden by the guards and imprisoned, it is not the guards but Chrysantza herself who addresses a complaint of trespassing to her father, though she does so in an elaborate scheme to save Velthandros. To make the complaint she 'donned the arms of a man, girt herself with boldness' (Ἄρμα ἀνδρὸς ἐφόρεσεν, ἀποτολμίας ζωνάριν),[80] and addressed her father as follows:

> Καὶ πῶς οὐ σχῆμα σοβαρὸν ἔχει μ'ἀγριωμένον, | ὅτι τῆς βασιλείας σου ἄνθρωποι, ὡς τοὺς δόξῃ, | εἰς περίβολιν ἀναιδῶς ἐμβαίνουν ἰδικό μου, | καθὰ ἀπόψα Βέλθανδρος ἦλθε, προσεχωρήθην;
>
> How can I not appear serious and disturbed when Your Majesty's men shamelessly enter my own garden as they see fit?[81]

[76] Ortner 1972. [77] Vakoch 2012: 3. [78] Ortner 1972: 24–6.
[79] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 838–47 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 20.
[80] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 928 (Egea); trans. Betts: 22.
[81] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 936–9 (Egea); trans. Betts 1995: 22.

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The garden is clearly described as belonging to Chrysantza herself and the presence of men in that space is presumptive and criminal.[82]

Kallimachos serves Chrysorrhoe in the garden of the Dragon's Castle, tending to her wounds after he has rescued her, once she has accepted his affection. The garden is not hers directly, and Kallimachos has travelled through it once already to reach her, but the description of the garden, and the description of the heroine, as will be discussed below, are so closely connected that, in combination with Kallimachos's role as bath-servant and nurse, there can be no doubt of Chrysorrhoe's hegemony in this space.

Achilles is the exception in that he pole-vaults over the wall into the garden to see the heroine. Then again, even in his case, the heroine, who has previously refused Achilles's love, has been convinced by Eros to love him just before he accesses the garden. Thus the garden can be seen as the kingdom of the heroine, a place in which she is not only enclosed from society but in which she can, to a degree, choose whom to see. The unnamed heroine in the *Tale of Achilles* even goes so far as to state her wish to be a beautiful tree in the garden, untouched by love, expressing her sense of independence and safety in that space.[83] The more direct association between women and gardens can be seen in both *Digenis* and Hyrtakenos's text as well. In reality Byzantines were familiar with women having areas of control. The empress had her own quarters in the palace, in which she presided over a retinue of aristocratic women who held equivalent titles to those of their husbands, and who were present at court ceremonials. These spaces, guarded by eunuchs, clearly gave the empress considerable control, as here empresses are known to have continued the worship of icons during iconoclasm, and even hidden people who were out of favour with the emperor.[84] An area in which a woman had control was thus recognizable to Byzantines as being somewhat outside the male sphere, which itself is symbolized in these texts by the castle.

Feminine power in the garden can also be contrasted with male subservience in that space. Kallimachos, as mentioned above, tends Chrysorrhoe's wounds in the bathhouse of the garden, acting as nurse and servant. Later he becomes a servant to another man in order to be able to access the garden in which Chrysorrhoe is allowed to live after her abduction. Velthandros must follow the orders of his lady after his capture on leaving the garden. Achilles, most explicitly, contrasts correct masculine behaviour

[82] The four guards who catch Velthandros find him leaving the garden and on his way to his quarters, so presumably they are also stationed outside and not allowed direct access to the space.

[83] *Tale of Achilles* 1050–6 (Smith).

[84] Herrin 2013: 223–5.

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with the feminine garden space. Although he can fight myriad men, in the heroine's bed, situated in the garden, if attacked he would be killed, as he himself becomes effeminate in that space.[85]

Finally, the plant-like, harvesting imagery employed by the heroines themselves can be seen as positive. By using natural imagery of themselves, these heroines employ an imagery which presents them as passive, but they subvert it to go beyond the restrictions of being a tended plant. They fulfil the expectations of femininity while at the same time getting what they want, or at least are able to express their own desires and conditions before the hero can fulfil his. Chrysorrhoe uses the symbolism to give herself control of her situation, speaking out on behalf of herself and her lover, despite being bound and before an angry ruler to whom she is supposed to be subservient. Although Chrysantza seems to require male dress to enter a serious discussion with her father, she and the apparent grievance nevertheless remain closely linked to the garden. A sense of feminine power and fulfilment thus contrasts with the tended nature of the garden and heroine also presented, but the language used displays these aspects as complementary, not contradictory.

A Byzantine Phenomenon?

Although it has been convincingly argued by Ortner and others that nature and women are both universally considered inferior to men, Ortner still states that this by no means implies that the symbolism, or even the degree of inferiority, is the same across all cultures.[86] Goldwyn's assertion that the 'very real differences between the Byzantine Empire and its western counterparts hint at the limits of applying theory developed in one context to another' must be borne in mind.[87] Nevertheless, it is helpful to compare the depictions of women in other literatures, with these Byzantine examples, to gain a clearer idea of what is specifically Byzantine in these depictions. The imagery used in the Byzantine texts can therefore usefully be compared with the two cultures with which Byzantium interacted most, the Latin West and the Islamic East. Such a comparison presents itself as worthwhile, not least due to the translation of romance stories between these cultures. For example, the romance of Florios and

[85] *Tale of Achilles* 1255–60 (Smith).
[86] Ortner uses examples from China to highlight the different symbolic and actual roles played by women even within one culture, 1972: 6–7.
[87] Goldwyn 2017: 24.

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Blanchefleur shares one obvious element with some of the Greek texts; the floral name of the heroine, as highlighted above. Panagiotis Agapitos has already provided a useful comparison of romance literature from Byzantium, Latin Europe and the Perso-Arabic East, arguing for 'convergences in thought and artistic expression within the medieval world', from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries.[88] For example, he highlights structural similarities between *Livistros and Rhodamne* and Perso-Arabic literature, and the presence of western features such as jousting and French clothes, to argue for the relevance of this comparative approach.[89]

Gardens are also an important feature in the romance works of all three cultures. The garden in western romance literature is primarily a place of pleasure. The courtly romances follow the precepts of courtly life, so that the heroines in them are subservient to their male counterparts, but have a degree of control over them. This is, however, presented as a truly negative aspect when it prevents a knight from fulfilling his duties. Like Achilles's statement of emasculation in the garden, a western knight who stays too long in a garden has given in to temptation and causes grief to himself and others. This is true in Chrétien de Troyes' *Erec et Enide*. In that romance it is only after taking his wife with him on his adventures and eventually defeating a knight held captive in his lady's garden by his own promise, that Erec is reassimilated into normal society, along with the defeated knight and his lady. A woman in control of her own garden upsets the social balance. The lady of the garden in *Erec et Enide* is another example, as is Morgan Le Fay, whose female paradise causes some men to kill themselves.[90] Gardens in western romances are commonly places to encounter women, as they are places for pleasure, but they are owned by men so that they are tamed spaces. A woman in control of a garden makes it too close to the wilderness to be places of safety. This is true despite the prominent relationship between the Virgin Mary and gardens, and her autonomy, a factor which seems to have been deliberately ignored by the authors of the courtly romances. The connection is nevertheless maintained in that women outside of gardens can only be witches, outcasts or 'fair game'.[91] This obviously contrasts with the positive control presented in the Byzantine romances, with Chrysorrhoe and the heroine of the *Tale of Achilles* in particular.

[88] Agapitos 2010: 153–69. [89] Agapitos 2010: 159–60.
[90] See the episode of Morgan's *val sans retour* in *Lancelot-Grail* 92–5 (Lacy).
[91] Augspach 2004: 105.

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Positive displays of feminine power in a garden setting, while not often found in western romances, are identifiable in the Perso-Arabic tradition.[92] Like the gardens of the Palaiologan romances considered here, the main features included 'running water . . . and a pool to reflect the beauties of sky and garden; trees of various sorts, some to provide shade merely, and others to produce fruits; flowers, colourful and sweet-smelling'.[93] These gardens, especially those of medieval Persian literature, combine spirituality and sensuality, as they do in the writings of the thirteenth-century poet, scholar and theologian, Rumi.[94] While oriental literary gardens are familiar to western readers largely from modern adaptations of the *One Thousand and One Nights*, they appear in many other, more mystic, texts.

The story which is perhaps most comparable with the Palaiologan romances, at least in terms of the garden, is that of the *Seven Beauties*, or *Haft Paykar*, a twelfth-century work by Nizami of Ganja.[95] In this tale, two gardens feature in the frame story, one in which the king Bahrām celebrates his wedding, the other in which he holds court and rules well. In the main body of the story, each of the seven princesses who are his wives tells stories to the king in the individual pavilions built for them. Each tale is presented as being from the homeland of the wife telling it, but as Agapitos points out, 'the fictional and ideological background remains consistently Persian'.[96] Three of the stories told in the *Haft Paykar* feature gardens prominently. In the first the garden is an unearthly paradise, ruled by a woman, with whom the king, the hero in the story told to him, falls in love.[97] He is allowed to remain for a month, feasting and enjoying the pleasures of the garden and the many beautiful women in it, except the one he loves most. When he insists on embracing her, the garden disappears and the king loses his heart's desire through his own actions.

The second tale featuring a garden is similar, though with a more arduous terrestrial journey leading to calm and refreshment in a garden.[98] The hero of this tale is told to wait unspeaking in a tree in the garden while

[92] It is of course possible to find positive displays of female power in the western romances, but these often occur outside of traditionally female spheres, or involve a degree of cross-dressing: see Hess 2013.

[93] Meisami 1985: 231.

[94] Meisami 1985: 232 and 239–45. See for example the poem by Rumi 'Life Is Coming to the Rose Garden' in Ergin and Johnson 2006: 138.

[95] For a modern English translation, see Meisami 1995. Agapitos considers the similarities between this work and the Byzantine romances, in Agapitos 2010: 162, and draws parallels with the work of Chrétien de Troyes, in Agapitos 2012, 265–7, though he does not specifically mention the garden imagery.

[96] Agapitos 2010: 162. [97] Ganjavi 1995: 114–31. [98] Ganjavi 1995: 175–97.

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his host, the apparent owner of the garden, prepares to wed him to his daughter and give him many riches. Instead, the hero is tempted to climb down and join a feast of beautiful women, sleeping with the most charming who then turns into a monster. The third garden story again includes a feast and beautiful women, though this time the events occur to the owner of the garden.[99] Despite that, it is largely the women who are in charge, initially taking the owner for a thief and tying him up. Once released and concealed he falls in love, the lady accepts his affections, but a series of accidents occur in the garden preventing their union until the owner decides to make her his lawful wife. Each of these gardens is opulent, fertile, and highly sensual. While two are the property of men, the women found within them are distinctly not. The women in these texts may not control who enters the gardens, but they certainly have a degree of control over the actions which take place within them. All are gardens of love, all provide allegorical lessons for the king being told about them, and all are highly erotic.

While there has been less scholarship comparing the Perso-Arabic romance tradition – as opposed to the western tradition – with the Byzantine texts, Byzantium's eastern ties were significant. There had been a long tradition of literary translation and exchange with the East, and this continued into the Palaiologan period, through trade among other routes. The eastern examples of literary gardens discussed here are similar to the Palaiologan gardens in the female autonomy they portray as well as their more sexual nature. In this they bear a closer resemblance to the Palaiologan romances than heroines of western vernacular texts. Nevertheless, the gardens seem to differ in aim and role, stressing the spiritual role of both the women and the garden in overt terms, and often being the scene of danger as well as pleasure, thereby combining the negative and positive natural imagery of the women within them.

Conclusion

Ecofeminism as an approach to any form of medieval literature can seem anachronistic, in that attitudes towards gender in medieval cultures can be very different to our own. However, ecofeminism can also help draw out particular ties between women and the landscapes connected with them in literature. It also highlights distinctions made between landscapes that fall under the security of society, and those which do not, and the fear or

[99] Ganjavi 1995: 217–33.

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freedom that can be reflected in this connection or lack thereof. In terms of the Palaiologan romances, the ecophobia felt towards certain, undoubtedly threatening, environments, is reflected in the women within them, though they too can be overpowered, destroyed, even made safe, by a strong masculine, social presence.

The objectified, ideal beauty of the romances exists largely in the garden, and there is a consistency of representation and purpose among the gardens depicted. They are described in both naturalistic and artistic terms in much the same way as actual Byzantine gardens were described by contemporaries. Although we are in fact given limited information on the landscape and more about the objects, a sense of the garden as a generic motif is present. The natural imagery used in describing the garden is then also used of the heroines, serving to unite the garden and the heroine in their beauty and status. The garden motif is arguably related to the heroine in an erotic sense, with her being 'tended' by her lover and opening her garden to him at the same time as allowing him access to her body. Goldwyn highlights this element as reinforcing the gendered power dynamic 'women need men to protect them and keep them from dying' just as a plant need a gardener to thrive.[100]

However, the male role in the garden is generally limited to that of gardener/lover and is dependent on the favour of the heroine, so that the ecofeminist concept of male domination over women and nature is, to an extent, reversed. The heroes of these tales need the heroines to fully civilize them, in that they are not truly mature until they are in love. A positive presentation of femininity and nature as pleasurable and powerful in their own rights can also be identified, both in the acceptance of the hero prior to allowing him access to her space, and in the use of natural imagery in self-defence. Eros is the only male figure closely connected with the garden, but this is as much an expression of his divinity and power over mortals' hearts as it is an expression of his role in connecting the lovers. He does after all have power over all nature, as is indicated in his depictions.

The landscape motifs used are recognizable to the audience and designed to influence their thoughts and feelings as to the plots and characters of the romances. Gardens as a setting for love share particular imagery, across geographical and chronological boundaries, and the Palaiologan texts are no different, drawing on a number of influences. While they essentially take the basic features of the literary garden from

[100] Goldwyn 2015: 229.

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earlier Greek works, they utilize allegory as well as an appreciation for the beauty of nature to expand traditional motifs, and altering them to fit new fantastical plots and foreign influences. In doing so they indicate the late Byzantine perception that the beauty of nature augments the beauty of women, the virtue of creation can be reflected in the virtue of people, and allows for a degree of female autonomy.

The heroine is presented in these romances as being as beautiful as nature, more so when described in terms of the tended artifice of the garden. The garden reflects her personality and appearance, and forms her natural setting or literal home. She is not wholly subject to any man when in this space or when using its imagery, but the pleasure taken in the heroine and the landscape by the hero and the reader is also positive, and not completely objectifying. Her lover functions within this sphere as the gardener who protects and nourishes her, and the couple are able to consummate their relationship, before marriage, in the fertile garden. Put simply, the feminine gender is more strongly connected with the natural world, represented here specifically by the garden, than men. Like the garden itself, the heroine is somewhere between nature and male-dominated civilization, but both are a constant feature of these counterparts. Both women and nature are considered to thrive best when under the care of virtuous men, though without being entirely under male control. When compared with western and eastern texts, the authority of women within the garden most closely resembles the Perso-Arabic tradition. In contrast with the western depictions, neither women nor the garden are only positive when sensual and subservient. Ideas about nature and women appear interlinked in many cultures, and the authors of the Palaiologan period developed such ideas to reflect not only a range of literary influences, but also their own experiences of gardens and women, mainly in a positive way. This ecofeminist reading of four Byzantine romances has, I hope, presented the women, and particularly the heroines, in these works as more than one-dimensional set pieces, and presented the historical connections drawn between women and nature as more than simply idealization or oppression.[101]

[101] The research presented here is in large part drawn from my doctoral thesis, 'Nature and Narratives; Landscapes, Plants and Animals in Palaiologan Vernacular Literature', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Oxford (2016).

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CHAPTER 14

The Affective Community of Romance

Love, Privilege and the Erotics of Death in the Mediterranean

Megan Moore

Though readers of medieval texts may agree that love is foundational to romance, recent scholarship has invited us to reconsider both the place and construction of that emotion in the medieval world. Generations of readers have assumed that we understand what is meant by the love that is the basis for the genre, yet recent scholarship argues that for medievals, love was dissociated from the erotic. As a genre grounded in emotion, the Palaiologan romances invite us to consider a series of questions about what feelings do and how they structure texts, specifically how they are employed to imagine an idealized, elite community. In what ways does privilege impact what kinds of emotions can be expressed, and in what ways do emotions police the expression of privilege? And, once we understand the relation between emotion and community, in what ways does the core emotion of the community of romance – love – depend deeply, and surprisingly, on death?

Historians of medieval affect such as Barbara Rosenwein read emotion as fundamental to medieval cultural structures, an invisible set of practices that creates, binds and even polices medieval communities.[1] Reading with Rosenwein, we can imagine love as fundamental to the construction of the community of romance. However, recent work tends to de-emphasize the relation between love and passion, destabilizing its affective force in forging communities based on shared understandings of the relation between passion and love. Stephen Jaeger and William Reddy, for example, have separately reconsidered love's relation to passion, offering sustained readings of medieval love as decidedly dissociated from sexual desire.[2]

[1] Rosenwein 2002 and 2006.

[2] Jaeger 1999 and William Reddy 2001. Many recent studies have deviated from the traditional reading glorifying a kind of 'romantic' courtly love; many explore the violence inherent in the genre, particularly from a feminist standpoint. See Bloch 1991, Burns 1993, Krueger 1993, Žižek 1994, Bruckner 2000 and Burns 2001. Yet few (if any) studies to date have sought to problematize the affective suppositions of the genre by linking its inherent violence to its theory of emotions.

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Yet despite rereadings of love as an expression of platonic ideals, it remains difficult to explain the drives that fuel the dynamics of romances around the medieval Mediterranean as divorced from passion, a longing so strong it is almost universally destructive in medieval literary texts. In this chapter, I will explore how romance depends on and informs an elite emotional community through its representations of erotic love. My readings here suggest that medieval romance is predicated on a shared, Mediterranean model of elite love that is steeped in what I call an erotics of death, where passionate love is directly tied to death.

Romantic Emotions and Constructing Medieval Communities of Privilege

The Palaiologan romances – like all romance – imagine emotions to define the contours of community values. Most prominently, this is love; it is also rage, despair, fear, dejection, sorrow, joy and aggression. These feelings trace the contours of the heroism, sacrifice and interpersonal drama inherent in the genre's relentless exploration of elite identity. Feelings are crucial to the construction of identity, and they are nowhere more thoroughly explored than in texts of the heart. While scholars of affect studies have focused on the expression of emotion within nationalized textual boundaries (as in emotion within medieval English romance or within Byzantine hagiography), little comparative study has yet been undertaken. I claim, however, that medieval texts from a variety of religious, linguistic, generic and geographic traditions rely on a shared affective community first developed in the emotional framework of a Greek-speaking elite. I propose that these texts both describe and reinforce noble love through shared Mediterranean culture, a kind of communal emotional framework rooted in shared values of heroism, sacrifice and honour. Following the recent work on the affective bonds of community, we may explore how Palaiologan romance uses narratives of Greek emotions to construct the stories of a privileged – and, I claim, Mediterranean – ethnography.[3]

[3] According to Anthony Kaldellis (2013), Byzantines had little to no interest in figuring the world beyond their ken, in imagining the self through sustained reflections on the geocultural other. In his *Ethnography after Antiquity*, Kaldellis has recently argued that the dearth of travel literature (which he examines in the form of 'ethnographies') in Byzantium resulted from a marked disinterest in destabilizing the direct relationship between Byzantium and God by admitting the influence of or interest in the 'other' – essentially reifying Byzantium as the God-sanctioned source for all culture and knowledge. Yet, it is possible to nuance our conception of Kaldellis's Byzantine 'ethnography' to include the writing of culture through an exploration of the emotional self, through the diffusion of a shared, elite culture of emotions. Emotions are, after all, integral to the frameworks which create

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That is, we might read romance as an invitation to explore an ethnography of the elite heart.[4]

Emotions make for a messy subject of literary study; they are not easily defined in medieval sources. What, for example, constitutes love? What are 'real' or 'true' signs of love, or grief, or anger? And, are emotions precognitive (i.e. neurobiological impulses, the rawness of 'affect') or are they moderated by will, social regulations or communities (post-cognitive responses, the socially contextualized 'emotions')?[5] Barbara Rosenwein's work, which I follow here, advocates a *socially contextualized* view of emotion, in opposition to a model in which emotions are blind, instinctive or neurochemical responses; it is a model that invites us to explore how people's expectations around and responses to emotional provocation vary by group, a kind of emotional ethnography, to borrow from Anthony Kaldellis. As such, Rosenwein's work helps us consider not only the expression of *emotions* within romance, but also what *communities* are being created and responded to by the expression and regulation of affect within a particular group.[6] If we accept this socialized (rather than biological) model of emotions, we may then explore the communities to which the regulation and expression of affect are tied; in the case of texts produced for and sponsored by the medieval elite, we might assume that these texts are intimately tied to their sponsors and listeners – that is, the nobility. The emotions expressed, criticized and endorsed within romance respond to and inform a certain noble public, tying the emotional community of the text to its social community, essentially wedding emotional expression and regulation to particular privileged political identities.

Literature written in medieval Greek was produced by and for a community not only linked to a localized geolinguistic milieu, but also to a

coherent narratives of the self, which delineate practices of the self from those of the other, and which reify 'proper' responses to conflict and celebration.

4 Borghart and de Temmerman 2010: 49, argue that Byzantine romance is based on just such communities: 'As will be apparent from our subsequent analysis, both these pragmatic circumstances led intellectuals of the respective periods to conceptualize an "imagined community" by promoting the values of Hellenism. In this respect, the corresponding "world view" consisting of the semantic topics of Greek cultural superiority and political discontent found an adequate mode of expression in the narrative syntax – that is, world construction – of the adventure chronotope.'

5 A useful primer on emotion theory in the medieval period can be found in the interview with leading historians and theorists in Plamper 2010. Though there are thousands of studies in fields as diverse as cognitive neuroscience, anthropology, musicology and history, some guideposts on understanding how emotions might be framed may be found in Harré 1986, Panksepp 1998, Knuuttila 2004, Konstan 2006, Reddy 2012, Scheer 2012 and Zahora 2014.

6 Rosenwein 2002 and 2006. See also the emotional ethics of community advanced within Ingham 2003 on mourning as a communal activity in Anglo-Saxon culture.

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broader community of texts interested in shaping and representing privilege through romance; there is no reason to believe that the emotional communities theorized by Rosenwein (in a study of particular affective communities in medieval France) should not also have existed in Byzantium (in their own form), nor is there reason to eschew formulating emotion as communally contextualized simply because of national or religious borders. We might therefore compare texts not in terms of direct intertextuality (i.e. one-way patterns of influence from Greek to Old French or Middle High German, etc.), but for their affective similarities, a kind of *intertext of affect*, where certain emotions (like love and grief) resonate throughout the genre of romance, regardless of its language or place of composition. Though we must not deny that the medieval period had its own communities that varied by place and cultural practice, if we can conceptualize emotional communities as a kind of narrative about what kinds of feelings should accompany which events, a discourse about who may express them and how, we can theorize them as a kind of text, where the regulation and expression of emotion is itself a story. As such, while the emotional texts of romance do vary by their 'reading' in different geocultural spaces, I claim that the commonalities of privilege among the Mediterranean nobility invite us to unravel romance as a set of emotional intertexts. Reading love affairs in Greek-language novels from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries reveals a tapestry of privilege woven through the elite, Mediterranean production, dissemination and reception of certain kinds of emotions, in particular the emotions surrounding love and death. We may thus read for a shared ethnography of the elite Mediterranean heart.

Love and the Palaiologoi: the Value of Death in Figuring Community

We think we know that romance is predicated on love, and that medieval love is an emotion that is recognizable to us.[7] Despite recent work that focuses on medieval love as sublime, I argue that in romance, the emotional education of elites is predicated on an erotics of death, pruning and shaping feeling rules about passionate love to show young nobles both internally (within the text) and externally (within its audience) how death

[7] The scholarship on love – both before the theorization of emotions and after – is rife with discussion about how love was conceptualized in the Middle Ages. See, for a sampling, Kelly 1968, Angold 1989, Bloch 1991, Solomon 1991, Žižek 1994, Adams 2007, Mann 2013 and Savin 2013.

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and passion are co-constitutive.[8] One of the most sustained and cogent reflections on the relation between privilege, love and death occurs in the fourteenth-century *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, where we see a pair of lovers whose emotional encounter is framed as the contest between love and death.[9] Like many romance protagonists, Velthandros sets off to travel because he *lacks* the necessary affective bonds with his community – that is, his emotional framing is too sublime, and he is specifically faulted for never having been touched by Cupid's arrow (259). His quest is literally for emotion, and he realizes he is not alone in his need for an emotional education when he comes across many others whose stories parallel his own (320–40). When Chrysantza finally meets him, she immediately recognizes love as pain, saying, '[m]y heart and my mind are in torture. I am on fire. I burn. I find no end to my suffering.'[10]

Velthandros teaches its audience that dispassionate affection is pointedly *not* an appropriate display of noble masculinity; the true ruler will be a passionate man, one whose control over his love (and his lover) helps to articulate the core values of the elite he controls. The encounter frames emotion as a performance, and for the elite, it is a performance of power. When our hero enters a castle, he meets a personified Love in the guise of Eros, whose emotions are imbued with powers of life and death: he is love as an executioner, a prisoner-taker.[11] Eros's assaults frames nobility through emotion, the arc of his arrow's flight tracing the affective borders of its community through emotional regulation. The relation between noble emotion and body is described as torture; the wounds of Eros's arrows threaten the unrequited lover with an agonizing death.

The ensuing emotional journey of *Velthandros and Chrysantza* is one that feels familiar to readers of romance: the lovers are separated by calamity – here, a swollen river – and nearly die over their sorrow for their mutual loss. Thinking she has found her lover dead in the badly disfigured corpse of a drowned man, Chrysantza seeks to impale herself upon the sword she finds on his body (1190). As in the text's earlier characterization of love as the cupid whose arrows drip with the lover's blood, this later characterization is shrouded in death, with corpses and swords providing the metaphorical markers that orient Velthandros's

[8] In contrast to this work stands more recent theories of affect in which some argue for sublime, non-sexual formulations of love, especially in work touching on medieval France. See the especially formative studies of Reddy 2012.

[9] See in particular the assessment of Beaton 1996: 60.

[10] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 839–40; trans. Betts 1995: 20.

[11] Agapitos and Smith 1992. See also Agapitos 2004 and Nilsson 2001.

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journey towards successful lover-ruler towards an understanding of love as both death and power.

The text presents love as bordering on the abject: without love, Velthandros will lose his identity, stripped of his right to rule in ways that threaten his performance of gender (as a man) and power (as an elite ruler). Unwilling to risk repudiation by elite community, Velthandros must learn to love; love permits him to perform his identity as a successful, ruling man.[12] We learn along with Velthandros that the proper performance of elite emotions literally *creates* elite power, rendering love a performative utterance. Even with its deadly wounds and the threat of abjection, falling in love permits him to create and narrate his status as a complete, whole man, fit to rule. Learning to feel allows him to narrate his journey to power:

> When Velthandros recovered his wits and his reason he began to tell the eunuch about himself; how, because of the boundless grief caused by his father, he had gone into exile and left his home . . . how he had travelled and come to the castle of Love; all the inscriptions and figures he had examined, what Fortune had in store for him, the union with Chrysandza, their nakedness as they fled, the fatal river. Of these and other things he spoke to the Eunuch and they both cried.[13]

The quest is not for renown, then, but for the expression of emotion, and *Velthandros* ties the performance of gender and privilege to the display of affect: here, both filial and erotic love are expressed as an ability to feel. His emotions (liberally translated by Betts as crying) perform his noble community through the expression of love for his father, for his deceased brother and for his foreign bride.

Velthandros's successful performance of identity in community – in this passage, the perception of his masculinity as a ruler – is described as proportional to his display of emotion, and the text is as much a description of a love affair as it is an education for elite men: passionate love is integral to powerful masculinity. Christina Christoforatou has recently read Eros as a vehicle for examining sovereignty in Byzantine court ideology, yet from an affective perspective, *Velthandros* suggests that

[12] In this, as in many other contemporary romances written in Old French (Chrétien's *Erec et Enide*, *Yvain* and *Cligès*; *Le Roman de la Violette*, *Le Roman de la Rose*, *Floriant et Florete* and *Flore et Blancheflor*; Froissart's *Prison Amoureuse*); English (*The Canterbury Tales* and *Troilus and Chriseyde*) and Middle High German (*Tristan*, *Niebelungenlied*), the protagonist undergoes an education designed to school him as an erotic lover, echoing what I identify as a long, Mediterranean literary tradition of love as an education in elite community.

[13] *Velthandros and Chrysantza* 1280–3; 1290–4; trans. Betts 1995: 29.

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Eros's power is to focus on emotion itself as a tool of control, without which sovereignty cannot be performed.[14] *Velthandros*, then, offers one theory of love in the Palaiologan romances: passionate, powerful, performing community as it constructs and polices dominant forms of masculinity and femininity. Though performances of sovereignty are culturally and historically situated, reading across Palaiologan romances suggests a shared sense of how communities of privilege are created by the bond between love and grief, what I characterize as an erotics of death grounded in a Mediterranean textuality that stretches back to the ancient novel.

The Mediterranean Origins of the Erotics of Death: the Ancient Novel's Framework

As the work on love in the ancient world can attest, the emotion has always been complex; its early literary representation, however, seems universally rooted in its associations with death.[15] We look to ancient texts to explain Palaiologan depictions of love through death because they offer the first depictions of the motif common to later, medieval-era texts. In ancient texts, lovers are often separated in perilous shipwrecks, and reunited lovers mistake one another as dead and try to commit suicide. In the second-century ancient Greek novel *An Ephesian Tale*, for example, the hero, Habrocomes, arrives in Sicily and comes across an elderly fisherman, Aigialeus, who as a young man had eloped from Sparta with his lover, who has now died. Aigialeus has not buried her; rather, after having mummified her, he continues to sleep with her. In episode after episode, Habrokomes cannot break the bond of love and death; he cries out, despondent for his beloved:

> At this he brought Habrocomes into the inner room and showed him Thelxinoe. She was now an old woman but still seemed beautiful to Aegialeus. Her body was embalmed in the Egyptian style, for the old fisherman had learnt embalming as well . . . While Aegialeus was still speaking, Habrocomes broke into a lament. 'Anthia, the unluckiest girl of all! When will I ever find you, even as a corpse? The body of Thelxinoe is a great comfort in the life of Aegialeus, and now I have truly learnt that true love knows no age limits.'[16]

[14] Christoforatou 2011.

[15] Scholars of the ancient novel have focused on the complex intertextual and philosophic references to be untangled in the construction of erotic love in the novels; their work, too, invariably draws a link between love and the construction of power. See, among many others, Konstan 1994a, 1994b and 2006; Alvares 2002.

[16] Xenophon of Ephesus, *An Ephesian Tale* 5.1.10; 5.1.12; trans. Anderson in Reardon 1989.

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The vacillation between joy and despair centres around the figure of the dead lover, creating an erotics of death that courses throughout the narrative, seen again here where he exclaims:

> 'What pirate', he exclaimed, 'is so much in love as to desire your corpse and even take your body away? I, poor wretch that I am, have been deprived of your body, my only consolation. So I am absolutely determined to die. But first I will go on until I find your body, embrace it, and bury myself with you.'[17]

Even Anthia, the supposedly dead heroine, at one point explicitly links the forces of love with death in the ancient Greek world when she exclaims to her captors, 'I am a sacrifice to two gods, Love and Death. Leave me to devote myself to them in peace.'[18]

Like Anthia, other lovers in ancient novels equate love and death. Longus's *Daphnis and Chloe*, for example, a second-century Greek pastoral novel, depicts elite lovers so enthralled with each other that they wish to die. Expressing his love as death, Daphnis mourns his absent lover, expressing the depth of his love through a chiasmatic relation with his wish to die:

> 'Here I will lie and await death, or some other attack. Are you suffering like myself, Chloe? Do you still remember these fields, these Nymphs, and me? Or do you find some consolation in the sheep and goats that are your fellow prisoners?'
>
> While he was thus lamenting, a deep sleep overcame him in the midst of his grief and tears.[19]

Though love is only figuratively associated with death here, grief and ecstasy are more explicitly interwoven when the lovers are reunited:

> At this sight and at these words Daphnis started up from sleep. Weeping both for joy and grief, he did obeisance to the statues of the Nymphs and promised, if Chloe should be saved, that he would sacrifice to them the finest of the goats.[20]

Here, love is figured as sacrifice, as 'joy and grief' for which only death (in the form of sacrifice) can suffice. What I am characterizing here as an erotics of death, the conflation of love and death, of desire and grief, is

[17] Xenophon of Ephesus, *An Ephesian Tale* 3.10.2; trans. Anderson in Reardon 1989.
[18] Xenophon of Ephesus, *An Ephesian Tale*; trans. Anderson in Reardon 1989.
[19] Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 2.22.4–2.23.1; trans. Thornley 1916.
[20] Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 2.24.1; trans. Thornley 1916.

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woven throughout the ancient novel, and I read it as the emotional underpinning of elite Mediterranean culture in medieval romance.

Roderick Beaton attributes the place of love in Byzantine romance to the influence of ancient Greek associations between Eros and Charon, claiming that in both the ancient sources and their Byzantine reworkings, love has the power to reanimate death.[21] Certainly this seems to be the case in countless examples taken from the ancient novel, including the fisherman in *An Ephesian Tale*, who keeps the body of his dead wife embalmed in his home, so he can look upon her with love as when he first saw her, or the many lovers' deaths in Heliodorus's *An Ethiopian Story*.[22] But figuring love as triumphing *over* death, as *reanimating* death, is different from love being figured *through* death, which is the case throughout medieval romances centred on elite love, and the cornerstone of an erotics of death. Although Beaton reads Byzantine love in tandem with ancient Greek depictions of Eros, I contend that medieval texts are more interested in figuring love *through* death than in figuring love as triumphing *over* death; they are not separate, but co-constitutive.

Digenis Akritis may help explain why erotic love is continually figured through death in the Palaiologan romances, and thus only obliquely resonant with the figuring of love as reanimating death in the ancient novel.[23] *Digenis* figures love on the brink of death; when Digenis abducts his would-be bride, he is all the more valiant as he is pursued by her brothers to the brink of death for his unwelcome, passionate abduction. The lovers, seeing their imminent separation and the dangers of battle, frame the heights of their love through a discourse of death:

> I said to her, 'Why do you not speak, dearest?' | 'Because', she said, 'my voice has died before my soul. | For look, we are being separated and I don't

[21] Beaton 1996: 60.

[22] Several scholars have identified multiple episodes in the text as links between death and love. Alvares 2000 argues that '[f]or Callirhoe this journey is clearly a type of death'. Doulamis 2000–1 argues that the emotional declamations within *Callirhoe* are expressed within a careful, considered set of rhetorical conventions, resulting in a different set of reader responses based on education (and therefore, class) levels among listeners (in 68–70). See also Hägg 1987, Cueva 1996 and Scourfield 2003.

[23] I follow Beaton here in reading *Digenis* as a romance, in that for my purposes it follows many of the emotional conventions of the genre: deep, sustained exploration of the nature of identity through its relation to the emotions of love and despair; the quest for individual renown through martial prowess; and iterative encounters that test the characters' dedication to expressing 'true' feelings of love and loyalty. I also follow Jeffreys in her assessment of its early dating. I leave the full debate on *Digenis* to others; in any case, its typification of emotion resonates with an elite, Byzantine community predicated on love's relation to death, and neither its dating nor its generic form impact how it imagines passion as both dangerous and necessary for elite rule in texts like our Palaiologan *Velthandros*. On the dating of *Digenis Akritis*, see also Chapters 9 and 11 in the present volume.

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> want to go on living'. | 'My soul', I said, 'stop thinking such things. | Those whom God has joined, men shall not separate'.[24]

In referencing Mark 10:9, the passage privileges the spiritual and eternal over the physical and terrestrial, offering a possible Christian explanation for the erotics of death that permeate medieval romance. By focusing not only on the present threat to the elopers' union (death at the brothers' hands), but on the timelessness of their commitment to one another (an eternal union), the text insists on eternal – rather than terrestrial – time. By linking love and fame with godly time, *Digenis* invites us to consider the emotion as steeped in practices of both contemporary class *and* religion, linking the emotion to a particular community – here *Digenis* seeks to represent the practices of an elite, medieval, Christian warrior culture. *Digenis* thus offers a medieval, Christianizing context for reading the performance of emotion (that is, love-as-death) within romance: love is eternal, because it is sanctioned by sacrament, sealed before God and transcends earthly time.[25] Death, then, may be eroticized as the eternal, flipside of love: love does not transcend death, rather, it is best figured in the immortality of Christian death.

With one foot shuffling off in mortal time and the other beating to eternal time, a dying Digenis tells his wife:

> You know, however, my soul, what was done to them, | for without a weapon I handed them all over to death. | These deeds I performed for the sake of your love, | To which I preferred neither the world nor life.[26]

Both the text and its warriors figure death as a way of measuring love; here, the men's deaths are a chiasma that highlights the emotional bond of love between the spouses and simultaneously figures Digenis's renown. The text specifically contrasts *thanatos* and *agape* by using them in the same antepenultimate grammatical position in the verse, syntactically reminding readers of their relation to the terminus, the end of all being and the beginning of eternity.[27] Digenis's language suggests that love, renown and privilege are all best expressed through death.

[24] *Digenis Akritis* 6.139–43; trans. Jeffreys 1998. All references are to the Grottaferrata manuscript.

[25] As in the twelfth-century medieval French play, *Le Mystère d'Adam*, in which the church instructs the couple during their marriage ceremony that 'she loves you, and you love her, | so you will both be best together in me [God]' ['tu aime lui, e ele ame tei, | Si serez ben ambedui de moi']. Discussed further in Cartlidge 1997: 41.

[26] *Digenis Akritis* 8.100–3; trans. Jeffreys 1998.

[27] Pelikan 1986, Dales 1990, Marenbon and Luscombe 2003, Moreno-Riano 2003.

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The Komnenian novels also take up this same temporal language, and as such serve as another affective intertext for the framing of privilege in later Palaiologan romances. In Eugenianos's twelfth-century *Drosilla and Charikles*, for example, the eponymous protagonists are repeatedly separated and reunited in a Mediterranean adventure that serves not only as a chastity test for Drosilla, but also as a meditation on the nature of privilege, love and death. In passage after passage, aggrieved lovers express affection *as* death, using emotional intertexts to Greek and Latin texts, as in Kleinias's love expressed as 'dying . . . before time' (4.305); Kallidemos wishing to take the unwilling Drosilla to be his 'beloved as a tomb-companion' (6.478); exemplifying perfect love through the deaths of Daphnis and Chloe (6.440) and Hero and Leander (6.489); and even bemoaning the influence of Philomela and Itys as noisy birds breaking the dawn of a sleepless lover's night, the 'worst species of wicked birds'.[28] Not only is love repeatedly linked to death by all those in the text, but the emotional language of the text is created through a communal understanding of the emotions of an elite, Mediterranean past.

In this mournful tale of separation, love is characterized as 'black, hateful Fate' and expressed through 'groans and pains', 'tears' and 'great lament' more often than it is described as blissful, peaceful, joyous or even arousing – emotives we typically associate with medieval romantic love. While Stephen Jaeger has recently argued that we should reformulate our understanding of love as sublime and non-sexual, reading from the liminal perspective afforded by death reveals its importance to articulating the core ideals of elite community, which throughout Greek romance are associated with sexual passion.[29] Perhaps the most revelatory reflection on the relation between death and love comes from the crowd in Barzon, rather than the lovers themselves, when Drosilla is finally reunited with her beloved Charikles before their fathers:

> Tears of joy flowed in abundance, | and lament seemed to surpass the joy.
> All the people of Barzon | . . . | all were embracing the young persons continuously. |
> Their laments released a great sound, | and their joy replaced their lamentation;
> | thus the whole community was grieving | and leaping for joy together with the fathers.[30]

In this passage, grief and joy are not mutually exclusive, but rather co-constitutive – and together they encompass and constitute the contours

[28] *Drosilla and Charikles* 7.645–55; trans. Jeffreys 2012. [29] Reddy 2012 and Jaeger 1999.
[30] *Drosilla and Charikles* 9.166–8, 173–7; trans. Jeffreys 2012.

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of the community. Here, love is not expressed as wild joy, raucous happiness or erotic desire, but rather by the pairing of the emotives χαρά (joy, pleasure) and θρῆνος (lamentation): they are ways of describing the same emotion.[31] The moment of love is one negotiating the tension between *both* fulfilment and lack, complicating in particular Roderick Beaton's reading of love as *replacing* or *transcending* death – that is, separate from death – in romance.

Love in the Mediterranean

Ancient pirate-captive love narratives such as *An Ephesian Tale*, *Daphnis and Chloe* or the works of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius seem to have clearly influenced later, Byzantine authors such as Theodore Prodromos, whose *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* contains many of the same tropes, including sea voyages, pirate abductions and the lovers' near-suicides.[32] Yet the phenomenon is by no means limited to Byzantium. Medieval western texts offer some of the best examples of how shared, Mediterranean motifs underlie this erotics of death, as in John Mandeville's *Travels*.[33] In Mandeville, the armchair traveller confronts the imagined alterity of Cyprus through a narrative about nefarious practices of love on the shores of the Mediterranean, the so-called 'Curse of Satalia'. He recounts a story in which a young king falls in love with a beautiful maiden who becomes ill and dies. Yet, even in her death (55):

> on account of the great love he had for her he went one night to her grave and opened it and went in and lay with her and then went on his way. At the end of nine months a voice came to him one night and said, 'Go to the grave of that woman and open it, and behold what you have begotten on her. And if you go not you shall have great evil and suffering.' And he went and opened the grave, and there flew out a very horrible head, hideous to look at, which flew all round the city.

In some versions of this morbid tale of necrophilia, a serpent slithers out and ravages the kingdom, in other iterations such as in the prose *Merlin*, it is a gorgon-headed monster that plagues the nearby seas. Yet every iteration imagines a nexus of desire, sex and death that is at once dangerous and erotic, a way of figuring monstrous alterity through a voyage of

[31] See Alexiou and Cairns 2017, esp. chapters by Hinterberger, Nilsson and Agapitos.
[32] For example, MacAlister 1996: 116, Pickford 1975, Archibald 1986 and Robins 1995.
[33] John Mandeville, *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. I have written more extensively on the erotics of death in western texts in Moore 2014.

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emotion. The traveller imagines alterity as not only cultural, but also emotional, a journey that I typify as a kind of 'affective travel'. Here, travel permits an encounter with and exploration of the strength of romance's affective bonds, essentially entwining love and grief through necrophilia.

It seems clear that this pejorative description of Byzantine love responds to particular, historically situated cultural anxieties about Byzantium in the West. As Malcom Barber points out, the frequent reappearance of the Satalia vignette in western medieval literature responds to anxieties about crusader travel in Byzantium in the late twelfth century, where crusaders may have encountered the Satalian myth in the Gulf of Antalya.[34] Barber is primarily interested in the deployment of the myth as leverage against Templars in fourteenth-century heresy trials; others have focused on this narrative for its relation to myths denigrating the alterity of the Greek-speaking diaspora.[35] Though both the scholarship and the medieval text itself spend considerable time struggling to establish the geographic and cultural alterity of this necrophiliac model, what interests me most is the centrality of this affective motif in medieval romance.[36] That is, though these treatments all seek to distance romance from the horror of eliding death and sex, as we see in reading both eastern and western texts together, death remains nonetheless integral to figuring romance's emotional culture.

The persistent whisper of emotional alterity in motifs like the Satalia legend suggests that for medieval listeners of romance, the emotional boundaries of their community were at least partly caught up in feeling rules imparted by ancient, Mediterranean models. In Old French literature, we see echoes of the Satalia myth in the later figuring of Arthurian sexual deviancy in the form of a demonic baby resulting from a necrophiliac coupling in the Old French *Livre d'Artus*. Laurence Harf-Lancner and, separately, Francis Gingras both work backwards to tie the Satalia legend to ancient Greek influences, citing the Medusa myth as informing shared notions of dangerous, aberrant sexuality.[37]

[34] Barber 2012: 212. [35] Ciggaar 1996: 345–6.

[36] Gaunt 2009, Lochrie 2009, Ganim 2010, Strickland 2012, Classen 2013. On deviant sexuality and travel narratives, see Metzler 2009 and Phillips 2009.

[37] Gingras 2014 notes that 'les commentateurs latins du mythe de Méduse le glosent en relation avec le désir et la sexualité. Dans son commentaire sur *La Pharsale* de Lucain, Arnulf d'Orléans interprète l'effet que la Gorgone produit sur les hommes en le comparant à la stupeur de l'amant devant l'aimée.' See also Harff-Lancner and Polino 1988.

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The disgust inspired by the Satalian encounter with putrefied flesh and the horror of the subsequent monstrous birth border on the abject, what Julia Kristeva has theorized as the threat of disgust that pushes one beyond the limits of subjectivity and emotional personhood, the threats to our personhood that make us shudder with repulsion (as in menses, cannibalism, excrement and death).[38] We might therefore claim post-mortem coitus as the transgression of taboo, a violation that maps the boundaries of civilization even as it surpasses them, creating what we might theorize through Kristeva as a kind of *affective abjection*, an emotional boundary of culture.[39] The episode relies not only on the geocultural alterity of sexual transgression, but it also anticipates an emotional response to taboo, a way for westerners to figure the lands and practices of the Greeks as emotionally abject, their desire as essentially othered beyond the borders of civilization, as evidenced by the text's claim that the Greeks' practices produce dangerous seas that plague the site of the monstrous serpent's death in the Gulf of Antalya.

The Mandevillian traveller's repeated profession of emotional horror (abjection) at the Satalian encounter becomes a key to unravelling the awkward tension between love and death in medieval romance. Though necrophilia may be the logical extension of an erotics of death, its practice is by no means condoned in romance, which focuses on the affective communities love provides for the living, not for the dead. The Satalian episode, then, both exposes and transcends the limits of the erotics of death, an erotics it situates squarely in Mediterranean communities of privilege.

Palaiologan Love

As these examples suggest, all who hear the swansong of love in romance also hear the wail of its siren-like counterpart, in the chthonic draw of death. Palaiologan romance, like its contemporary western counterparts, imagines a shared affective culture, in which the privileged are invited to participate in a community that feels love through its associations with grief and death.[40] There is perhaps no better invitation to critically

[38] Kristeva 1982.

[39] For more on transgression and taboo as it relates to sexuality, see Lévi-Strauss 1958, Bataille 1962 and Douglas 2002.

[40] Though there is scholarly debate about intertextual influence, with some claiming that Palaiologan romance was predicated on western models, I am interested here not in claiming any particular cultural primacy, but rather in exploring the diffusion of what I see as shared cultural *mores* about

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consider love as integral to the framing community within Palaiologan romance than the opening lines of *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, where the narrator comments that

> Nothing that happens on this earth, no action, no exploit, does not partake of grief. Joy and grief are mixed, even blended together. Beauty and charm have their share of grief just as grief often has its share of joy . . . Such is the nature of Love, its sweetness is not without alloy.[41]

The language entwining love and death permeates the text and is the primary way of describing the love affair, describing noble love using imagery of drowning, dying and burning. When the king describes his love, his body turns towards death: 'His limbs shook and his heart beat so fast that the old woman thought he was dying.'[42] The interweaving of death and desire continues when they enlist the help of a powerful witch to cast a spell which leaves 'Kallimachos lying dead, the lady completely unconscious and dazed, and the old woman . . . dancing erotically'.[43]

For her part, the captive Chrysorrhoe expresses her love for Kallimachos as a lament, and 'the lady's tears and laments would frighten you. She has completely faded and has finally been consumed by grief.'[44] Chrysorrhoe revives her afflicted lover with 'a voice of passion and of grief that tore at the roots of his heart'.[45] Their kiss is described as both incredibly sweet *and* dead: 'The ineffable sweetness of their kiss watered their fair but dead hearts like a river' and their passionate embrace allowed their 'dead hearts . . . to beat again in unison'.[46] In passage after passage, death literally figures love; here, death is the adjective modifying the beating heart, death is the heart that beats as one. The language of death is the primary way of figuring desire in *Kallimachos*, both reifying the erotics of death in this particular story and also tying them to a broader, Mediterranean lineage in which death, privilege and desire are entwined.

Likewise, in *Livistros and Rhodamne*, the narrator tells his tale of love through death, linking *Eros* to suffering explicitly at the outset of the text, when he says he will tell

noble love. See the introduction to Betts 1995, Beaton 1996, Jeffreys and Jeffreys 2001, Borghart and de Temmerman 2010 and Stephenson 2012.

41 *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 25–30; trans. Betts 1995.
42 *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1160–3; trans. 1995.
43 *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1318–20; trans. Betts 1995.
44 *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1558–1600; trans. Betts 1995.
45 *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1703–5; trans. Betts 1995.
46 *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* 1960–1; trans. Betts 1995.

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> a wonderful tale of love and of the terrible sufferings endured by a man of many trials and woes whom Love persecuted. From my story of passion's fury everyone will learn of the bitterness of Love and will marvel at how a man innocent of the world suffered so much from the time he began to feel desire.[47]

Like Velthandros, the Latin traveller whose tale is told at the outset of *Livistros* is a man whose nobility is incomplete, though he has all the worldly goods one could desire:

> Amid so much joy, amid so many pleasures, amid all my wealth and prosperity, amid the many luxuries and delights which I possessed and had at my command and in which I took pleasure, no concern for love ever came to me.[48]

Though our Latin traveller has all the requisite material goods without love, his identity is incomplete. Using both agrarian and metallurgic metaphors, Livistros's kinsman extolls the natural attractions of love in a futile attempt to convince him to let love work its ways on his heart (185).

As in the other texts we have seen, in *Livistros* love is terrifying: Eros and his followers are described as terrible fire-breathers, winged 'executioners who punish crime'.[49] The terms of love resonate with the same erotics of death that structure *Velthandros* and *Kallimachos*; Eros commands Livistros to submit to enslavement by desire (242–3). The story is replete with images entwining desire and death, love and grief, for example as when Livistros journeys to Eros's innermost chambers and comes across a boy being tortured by snake bites for not obeying Eros's command.

After Livistros is finally consumed by Eros's afflictions, he seeks out his fated Rhodamne, and they begin a love affair through letters. Love is an epistolary volley, letters lobbing emotions into being, creating and sculpting responses even as the feelings themselves are beyond control and processing. The lady, Rhodamne, is advised by her eunuch to avoid passion's deadly invitations in wording that further underscores Eros's chthonic register: its depths, it fiery furnace, its invitation to drown in a sea of longing.[50] Livistros implores his paramour, 'if you have been reared by Desire . . . share my woes, pity what I suffer'.[51] Livistros pointedly allies desire with death, lamenting that he saw 'a letter of love become a man's

[47] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 21–4; trans. Betts 1995.
[48] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 106–10; trans. Betts 1995.
[49] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 226; trans. Betts 1995.
[50] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 329–33; trans. Betts 1995.
[51] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 511–12; trans. Betts 1995.

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grave and words of affection my soul's death',[52] while in another letter he more concretely describes Love as a mixture of grief and joy, exclaiming, '[s]uddenly I again find joy in my grief and woes'.[53] In *Livistros*, the vocabulary of love is a vocabulary of death; the edges of noble love are also the edges of existence.

Yet in *Livistros*, Eros is not merely an embodied performance of the erotics of death, it is also a performance of community – a noble, privileged and *Mediterranean* community. The text takes care to describe the love affair in terms of status (pointedly, in terms of nobility) as well as in terms of geography – this is a love affair between a Byzantine woman and a Latin nobleman. The other metanarratives within the story also imagine cross-cultural love between Armenians, Syrians, Litavians and Byzantines; part of Livistros's and Klitovon's journey to recover Rhodamne takes them to Egypt, where the king himself has fallen in love with her. As such, the love affair imagined here is literally predicated on a shared sense of emotion, and it imagines a community of possible lovers – the Mediterranean nobility of Byzantine romance – as sharing an understanding not only of Love itself, but also of the erotics of death that structure its performances. That there is a shared eroticism across boundaries of 'nation' or 'culture' in cross-cultural love affairs in Palaiologan romance suggests that elite love both performs and shapes Mediterranean communities of privilege. Here, the erotics of death course throughout the love letters, spilling over into the romance itself and offering a shared emotional and cultural performance that permits the lovers' eventual encounter in the woods. Of all the Palaiologan romances, *Livistros*'s performances of intercultural love offer the most tangible support for reading romance as predicated on and propagating a shared, elite emotional culture grounded in a Mediterranean erotics of death.

Conclusions

Palaiologan romance uses emotions – and particularly, the genre's primary emotion, love – to delineate the borders of community and trace the contours of its audience of privilege. Yet the construction of love is not limited to the borders of Byzantine community, but also, through intertextual references to ancient Greek models of loving – what I have characterized here as inter-affective references – to a plethora of

[52] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 685–86; trans. Betts 1995.
[53] *Livistros and Rhodamne* 1809–11; trans. Betts 1995.

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Mediterranean models of elite emotional performance. Love, as it is depicted in the Palaiologan romances, is not only an emotion that defines elite community – that defines privilege – but it is one that defines that privilege through a literary genealogy that spans both time and geography, tying a shared sense of privilege to a shared set of emotional performances. In this reading, the erotics of death permeate not only Palaiologan romance but also the ancient novel, Byzantine epic songs and western medieval romances, creating a community that depicts privilege through a common language of emotion.

The repeated conflation of love with death in *An Ephesian Tale*, in *Digenis Akritis*, *Drosilla and Charikles*, *Velthandros and Chrysantza*, *Livistros and Rhodamne*, *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* and, pointing forward, in non-Byzantine texts like Mandeville's *Travels* and the *Livre d'Artus*, which also figure sex with the dead and a monstrous serpent-birth, reveal death as integral to the love that figures elite medieval culture in romance. Even when the erotics of death take different generic forms or are expressed in different languages, the form of elite desire is predicated on an eroticism first found in the taboos of ancient Greece.

We must therefore be attentive not only to the place of *emotion* in formulating and defining the contours of textual communities, but also how the genre as a whole imagines – in its emotional intertextualities – its communities to be deeply dependent on a *Mediterranean* emotional community. Across boundaries of geography, time, language and religion, medieval texts depict love as steeped in an erotics of death. Attentiveness to affect invites readers to consider the functioning of romance in the broader community that its narratives and its codices create, here a community centred around an erotics of death at home in elite courts and hearts of the Mediterranean.[54]

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[54] Portions of this chapter were presented at the Fifth International Conference on the Ancient Novel in Houston, where I am thankful to have received feedback from Aglae Pizzone, Luca Graverini, David Konstan and Romain Brèthes in thinking about love in a Mediterranean context.

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CHAPTER 15

The Bookseller's Parrot
A Fictional Afterword

Panagiotis A. Agapitos

Prologue, in Which the Narrator Introduces His Story

The south wind had brought some warm rain yesterday afternoon. At dawn today, the sky was misty, the air humid and the smell from the salty waters of the Golden Horn rather strong. But the sun was already warming the hills of Constantinople. One could feel that summer was approaching, while many of the city's quarters were already bustling with human activity. Demetrios, riding his horse and followed by his servant, had left his house in the Blachernai Quarter before the second hour. It was a joyful day this Tuesday, for the faithful were celebrating all over Christendom the holy memory of Constantine, the imperial founder of the Great City, and of his pious mother Helena.

Demetrios had promised himself that he would spend the day visiting some of his friends in the morning and then pay his respects to the widowed empress Helena early in the evening, as it was her name day. He had not seen the noble lady for quite some time since the old emperor's funeral. The absence of her gentle smile and sweet encouragement weighed on his worried heart. But no, today he would not let his melancholy disposition govern his thoughts. After many difficulties, the young emperor had finally succeeded his father and was already preparing an ambitious plan for bolstering the defences of the Rhomaian lands from the aggression of the insatiable Turkish ruler and his barbarian hordes. No, today Demetrios Kydones, former prime minister of two emperors, would not let his melancholy disposition govern his thoughts. With a white cap on his head, a long robe of red-brownish cotton thrown over his light woollen garment and his soft leather shoes he cut a fine figure for a 68-year-old man and cleric of the Roman Catholic Church. Even his servant Thomas Skaranos, usually more concerned with the health of his young wife, felt inspired by his master's more cheerful mood and whistled along as he carried a large sack and a basket filled with apricots and cherries.

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They moved in a south-eastern direction just above the sea walls and then turned westwards towards the Monastery of Christ at Chora. The streets were filled with trees offering their shade to the people going about their business. Just below the monastery a rugged shepherd was tending his sheep, while two gardeners further away were cleaning the plot of their vegetable garden. Turning into a small street, Demetrios and Thomas stopped in front of a simple two-storey house with a walled garden in front of it.

First Part, in Which Kydones Meets a Monk, a Scribe and a Landowner

Thomas helped his master get off the horse and straighten his robe. Demetrios took the basket and stepped into the house while his servant tied the horse to a tree. The ground floor was occupied by the kitchen, a storeroom and a sleeping area for the servant Mary, a serious woman of 40 devoutly taking care of her bachelor master. Kydones ascended a narrow staircase and walked into the main area of the first floor. In the left-hand corner, next to the window, his former pupil Manuel Kalekas was lying on his bed with his right leg stretched out in a wooden cast, broken accidentally about a month ago while he was stepping out of a boat in Galata. Two other men were sitting next to him, and all three were engaged in a conversation.

'It is difficult for me to accept a story if it is marred by so many errors, my dear fellow', said the tall, thin man, dressed in the white habit of the Dominican order. 'How is it possible to tell of the Trojan War when even the names of the most famous persons are completely disfigured! Erkoúlios instead of Heraklés and Pentachilía for Penthesíleia? These names sound Latin or maybe even French.' His long finger pointed to an open page of a thick book.

'But this is not the point, Maximos, can't you see it?' objected Tarchaneiotes, a well-built man of around 60. He was holding an oblong hat in his hands, indicating his status as a wealthy landowner. 'This story is not written for scholars like you; it's not Homer's austere poem of Achilles's wrath. It tells of all of the Trojan War and its aftermath for uneducated people like me, who want to learn something but also enjoy a good tale. Is that so wrong?'

'Using everyday speech to compose a poem of heroic matter is already tasteless. But mixing then this language with foreign words and actual errors is simply wrong', replied the monk.

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'You are being too severe, Maximos', replied Manuel with a smile on his face, 'especially since you know your Latin quite well'.

'Exactly, my dear Kalekas, and I would never use in Greek the appellation Hércules for Heraklés, nor would I write a story where the Greek somehow sounds more like French than proper Attic.'

'Look, I would not compare this tale to Homer's great achievement since his epic poems will be read as long as humankind exists. But this book is not made for the same kind of listeners.' noted Manuel firmly. 'As for myself, lying for more than a month now in bed, I am grateful to Tarchaneiotes for visiting me and reciting to me parts of the book. I found the story quite powerful. The description of the battles with the strong rhythm of the demotic verse, though roughly hewn, was not disagreeable to my ear.'

'Oh yes', agreed Tarchaneiotes. 'I like how the warriors make friends with each other and talk about their difficulties in war, avoiding the company of women and leaving them to their own tasks. Not unlike us three right now, isn't it?'

'Good morning, my friends. May the blessings of God and of his saints be with you', said Demetrios, interrupting the conversation. 'I have come to visit you, master Manuel, and find you discussing literary matters in a most impetuous manner. Should I assume that your health is better than two weeks ago, when you wrote to me about your sickness?'

'My dear lord Demetrios, what a pleasant surprise! Please forgive us and do take a seat. Mary', Manuel raised his voice, 'Mary, where are you?' The servant appeared from the staircase bowing her head. 'Bring some fresh lemon water for his lordship and for the rest of us.'

Kydones approached the bed, as Maximos and Tarchaneiotes stood up from their chairs. 'Please, do sit down. I am just an old man who has retired from imperial service and not worthy of such respect.' He gave Kalekas the basket. 'These fruits are from my garden. I hope that you will not find them too small a present for so good a friend.'

'They look fresh and have such a sweet smell', Kalekas replied and took an apricot to try it.

'So, what is this book about that seems to have irritated you, my dear Chrysoberges?' asked Kydones.

'Let Tarchaneiotes tell you', the monk replied. 'He is the book's proponent.'

'Not really', objected the landowner. 'It is my young Italian guest who lent it to me.'

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'I was not aware that Paolo da Milano reads such stories', remarked Kydones with a raised eyebrow.

'Oh you know him, my lord', Tarchaneiotes replied laughing. 'He reads any kind of Greek that falls into his hands, since he is so eager to learn our language and its various dialects. Anyway, the book is called the *War of Troy*. It does not say who wrote it nor when it was written.'

'And you said that it tells of all the war at Ilion and what happened after?' asked Kydones. 'Maybe something like the *Iliadic Poems* of John Tzetzes, that learned teacher in the times of emperor Manuel Komnenos?'

'Oh no, not in the least', remarked Kalekas. 'Tzetzes's verses were written to exercise pupils in learning the hexameter. The *War of Troy* is nothing of this sort. The book is quite new, if I am to judge by the quality of the paper and the simple handwriting.'

'As an expert scribe, you should indeed know of such matters.'

Kalekas went red. 'I do apologize, my lord, for not having as yet finished the corrected copy of your letters, but . . .'

'You do not have to apologize, master Manuel. I did not intend to blame you, but rather to praise you.' Kydones was not very good at this kind of light-hearted conversation, but he always made an effort to be pleasing to others. He turned to Tarchaneiotes who was looking at the hat in his hands, as if it were not his. 'Will you read me a few verses, my friend, that I might understand what you are talking about?'

'Certainly, my lord Demetrios.' He took the book from Chrysoberges, leafed through it and stopped somewhere in the middle. 'The story describes the fifth battle between Greeks and Trojans.' He started declaiming and his voice rose as he recounted the scene where Achilles kills Oupos, the king of India, after which Hektor is wounded in battle.

Kydones did not look very impressed. 'I do not like all this warfare and slaughtering. We have plenty of war and violent death in our own times.'

'This is sadly true', Tarchaneiotes agreed, 'but stories of soldierly prowess are always exciting. Many years ago, I heard a story about Achilles, his exploits in war and his love for Polyxena. It was a good tale.'

'I suppose that poets have the freedom to change the story to their needs', Kydones said, 'but all of this bears very little resemblance to the *Iliad*. What I find strange in the passage you recited is the appearance of dukes and counts, though certainly the Homeric heroes knew nothing of such titles that are of Latin origin.'

'You are right, of course', agreed Tarchaneiotes. 'But this is how the book makes the story comprehensible to the readers of our times. Let me

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read you a few more pages.' He went on with the tale of Troilos and his sad love for Briseis, and how the beautiful girl had to leave Troy and Troilos, since her father was exiled from the city. The story noted that she would very soon forget her first love and find another man, because all women are fickle, and this is what the wise Solomon says.

'How true', noted Chrysoberges.

'But what has the wisdom of Solomon to do with the heroes at Troy?' asked Kydones. 'What a strange combination.'

'One thing that I do not like in this story', intervened Kalekas, 'is this overt criticism of women. It is too strong and rather unfair. We know of so many splendid examples of Eve's daughters in historical writings, not to mention our own days.'

'As far as my wife is concerned, I am very happy with her. She has been a wonderful mother for our children and a most helpful companion to me for more than thirty-five years now', added Tarchaneiotes.

'I will not object to that, my friend', Kydones said seriously, 'but there are also other, not so splendid examples of the female species should I only look at some of the ladies at court. Be that as it may, I chose not to marry because marriage – not dissimilar to commerce – distracts you completely from the pursuit of knowledge and virtue, if I am to judge by the incomprehensible attachment of my servant to his wife.'

'Well said, my lord', agreed Chrysoberges. 'For certain, the company of women does not allow men to tread the path towards God. These kinds of stories we are talking about, even if they were well written, which they are not, do not help the soul of any pious Christian to attain salvation. Thankfully, there are many good and useful stories for such a purpose. I am thinking of the sermon you wrote on the life of Saint Laurence.'

'That sermon was more the work of a person devoted to the saint than of a writer ambitious to achieve literary excellence', Kydones remarked modestly. 'I would choose the life of the saintly empress Theophano composed by the learned Nikephoros Gregoras. I met this passionate scholar almost fifty years ago when he was living at the Chora Monastery. How well could he write the story of a saint's life and explain his or her deeds of peace and divine love, prompting us all to imitate such a virtuous conduct.'

'Your remark, my lord, reminds me of a comment made by the learned Patriarch Photios of old', said Kalekas, pushing his broken leg forward, in order to sit upright. Tarchaneiotes helped him. Kalekas drunk some water and continued. 'Photios noted that these peculiar pagan stories of love, which he called dramatic tales, though acted out with many despicable

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characters in sordid surroundings, would actually induce their readers to pursue a life of chastity and true conjugal love. If I remember correctly, he read these stories in close proximity to the lives of saints.'

'Dear God, Manuel!', exclaimed Chrysoberges, 'are you suggesting, that we, in the year 1392 from the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, should be reading the lives of Christianity's great martyrs side by side with tales of brutal combat or carnal love – the latter completely false, the former absolutely true?'

'Why then do we read Plato and Gregory of Nazianzus side by side? Was not Plato a pagan?' responded Kalekas calmly.

'My friends, this is too complex an issue to discuss now, while you, Manuel, are still recovering', Kydones interrupted, as he did not wish to stay for the rest of the day discussing this matter, even if it was very dear to his heart.

'Well, since you mention Plato', insisted Tarchaneiotes, 'what about Plutarch? He wrote his *Parallel Lives* so as to instruct us about the great men of the past. In fact, I have read a very interesting tale in prose about Alexander the Macedonian that presented quite different material from the life Plutarch had written about him. It was very instructive as well as entertaining.'

'I believe that it is always instructive to read the stories about the lives of important persons', said Kalekas. 'For such lives – be they of the great men from the Hellenic or Roman past, be they of the wondrous heroes of our Christian times – always offer us useful and pleasant teachings, while they also furnish us with guidelines on how to behave and what choices to make in our lives.'

Kydones stood up from his chair. 'I do agree with such a view, master Manuel, though I prefer reading philosophy and political oratory for my personal instruction. Where, however, I do disagree is the language used in such stories, for I cannot accept the use of our everyday speech to write about the tales of Troy and Achilles, of Alexander the Great or Saint Demetrios, my namesake and patron of my native city.'

'Are you leaving us, my lord?' asked Chrysoberges.

'Yes, I have to return to the Blachernai and stop at the house of Aplesphares. My old friend John Kalopheros will be waiting for me there. He is about to leave in a few days for Cyprus.'

'That is quite a coincidence', said Tarchaneiotes, taking the book from Chrysoberges and giving it to Kydones. 'Paolo should by now be also at Aplesphares. May I give you the *Tale of Troy* to return it to him?'

'Certainly.' Kydones wished Kalekas a quick recovery and, holding the book, went down the stairs to find his servant.

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Second Part, in Which an Italian Student Talks about Travelling Tales and a Clever Bird Is Discovered to Be a Literary Figure

Thomas, munching a piece of bread, jumped up from his seat and went to prepare the horse. Kydones decided to take the road next to the Chora Monastery. As they passed by the impressive complex, the buildings seemed to be empty. Signs of wear were evident everywhere – bricks fallen to the ground, mould growing on the walls, trees standing unattended inside the garden. What a pity, thought Kydones. But, then, life cannot but change continuously, despite our wish for everything to remain as we once knew it. Only God is eternal and unchanged in His immaterial essence. Kydones crossed himself and led his horse through a narrow path close to the city's walls where the southernmost parts of the Blachernai palace were situated.

The discussion with his friends had given Demetrios unusual food for thought. Was it possible to accept that one could be educated and yet read a story like this *War of Troy*? It was a big book and someone had paid for it to be copied. He remembered what difficulty he had as a student to buy a copy of Plato's complete dialogues. But he had to admit that it was better for people to read something than nothing. After all, he belonged to a privileged group of people who had acquired a deep knowledge of Hellenic literature and were able to communicate with each other in ways impossible to others. He did not intend to change his reading habits, but he would ask his new pupil from Milan about his readings in these narratives, should Paolo indeed be at Aplesphares's house. He liked the young Italian, though he was somewhat concerned that he wished to follow in his forefathers' steps and became a merchant.

'My lord, we have reached the street of the bookseller', shouted Thomas and brought Kydones back from his musings. They turned right towards the east and soon found themselves in front of a low building with its door and windows open ajar to the street. It was about the sixth hour of the day and the sun was strong. Barefooted children were playing on the dirty street, two women were bargaining loudly with a peddler over the price of a large sea bass, supposedly fresh from the Bosphorus. Thomas walked into the shop, announcing his master and leaving the heavy bag on the floor.

'What a great honour you pay to my humble shack', exclaimed Aplesphares, stepping from behind a long table to greet Kydones. He was a short man with a thick beard, cunning eyes and a leather apron tied around his broad waist, looking more like a seller of cattle than a purveyor of handwritten books and fine paper. There was no one else in the spacious

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room. A few books were lying flat on a shelf, batches of paper were stacked inside two open chests. Kydones made a sign to Thomas who opened the sack and placed four books on the table.

'I have brought you these books from my collection which I will not be needing anymore. Do you think that you could sell them for me at a fair price? I am certain that some diligent student will be in need of a selection of Attic oratory and the tragedies of Euripides, not to mention Aristotle's treatises on natural philosophy.'

The bookseller took on a sad expression. 'My lord', he said, 'times are not good for selling old books, especially if they are made of parchment. People have little money left in their purses, and what they have, they prefer to spend on clothes and jewellery, not knowledge.'

'You're a liar, you're a liar', croaked someone in the back corner of the room. It was a parrot perched on a stand. He had blue and green feathers on his head and wings, yellow ones on his belly. His head was tilted to the left and his eye looked straight at the bookseller.

'You're a liar, you're a liar', the bird repeated.

Kydones and Thomas started laughing, while Aplesphares wrung his hands in pretended desperation.

'Woe is me! Even my precious pet bird mocks me in my old age.'

'You're a fool, you're a fool', continued the bird, tilting his head to the other side.

'Stop this babbling, Livistros, stop it now!' ordered the bookseller and gave the parrot a walnut to eat.

'From where did you get this bird that can speak with a human voice?' asked Kydones who had never seen a parrot. 'And what did you call him?' Aplesphares opened his mouth to explain, but was cut short by two men who stepped into his shop.

'Thank God, my friend, you are still here', said the elder of the two. Kydones stood up and they embraced. John Laskaris Kalopheros was of the same age as Kydones, he had travelled to many places and had married three times before he finally settled in Cyprus.

'Good day to you, my lord Demetrios', said the young man with a slight accent in his Greek. Kydones smiled and handed Paolo da Milano the *War of Troy*.

'From master Tarchaneiotes. I understand that you provide him with entertaining reading.'

'It is not a sin, my lord', Paolo answered joyfully. 'After many hours of studying Thucydides, it is quite pleasant to read an easier book with an entertaining story. One might otherwise become too melancholy',

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he added, pulling from his pocket a small book and showing it to his teacher. 'I recently found this book that contains the *Tale of Florios and Platziaflora*, a translation in demotic verse of a Tuscan story that is a translation of a French story.'

'Is that so?' wondered Kydones. 'And what kind of translation is it?'

'Certainly not as exact as your translations of Augustine and Aquinas. I would say that the Greek renders the Italian in a free manner, making the story look more Greek than Italian or French', explained Paolo.

'You know, Demetrios', said Kalopheros, 'the *War of Troy* is also a translation from French, but with many changes and omissions. I once heard a French monk recite parts of it, when I was many years ago at the pope's court in Avignon.'

Kydones nodded, thinking that Chrysoberges was right about the mixture of Greek and French in that text. 'Maybe for such stories true translations are not necessary, because their aim is to make the text attractive', he said. 'However, in the case of philosophy and theology the translation must be exact, or else the arguments about a specific topic are misrepresented or become incomprehensible.'

'Stories when told and retold always change', Kalopheros remarked. 'You can see that happening in the tales told by old women to children. And the *War of Troy* has travelled to many places changing languages. I have read parts of a translation in Latin and I have seen a translation in German.'

'I know of another story that has travelled around the world', added Paolo, 'it is about a French prince called Parthenopeus who wins the hand of the Greek empress of Constantinople. Melior is her name and she has magical powers. I know of translations in Italian and Spanish. It is a very entertaining story of love, and I wouldn't be surprised to find out that it has reached these Grecian shores.'

Kydones was taken aback. 'A French prince in the Great City married to a Greek empress who is a sorceress? Does this story look true or is it completely fabricated?'

'My friend, people don't care much about such subtle matters', Kalopheros said. 'Do you think readers believe in the existence of magic horses, magic cloaks, dragons, deadly rings and old witches? But when the brave prince wins at last the hand of the beautiful princess, then everybody is happy, wouldn't you say so?'

'I would not know, John', Kydones replied dryly.

'Oh but it is so', Paolo chimed in, 'and I can imagine that the more Latins and Greeks come to know each other in peaceful circumstances, and

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not in war, as in older times, the more old and new stories will travel. I am thinking of translating one such Greek story into Italian. It is called *The Tale of Livistros and Rhodamne*.'

'You're a liar, you're a liar', croaked the parrot again looking at Paolo.

'No, I am not!' he objected.

'Livistros, Livistros', said the parrot triumphantly, swung himself onto the large table and started walking towards his master who had placed four walnuts in front of him.

'Astonishing', Kydones remarked. 'He is very clever.'

'That's why I call him Livistros', explained Aplesphares. 'He knew this name from his previous owner, a wine seller from Chios.'

'But who is this Livistros and his tale?'

'That is a long story, my lord', replied the bookseller putting on his most innocent expression, 'but an idea just occurred to me. I happen to have a good copy of this wondrous tale. Could I offer it to you in exchange for your book of Attic orators? A new story for some very old rhetoric?'

'Aplesphares, your proposal is preposterous!'

'But you know, the parrot appears in the book.'

'What?'

'Yes, he does because he belongs to princess Rhodamne', the bookseller insisted, 'and, more than that, the parrot in the *Tale of Livistros* is referred to in a treatise on animals and their properties called the *Physiologos*'.

Kydones looked at him, irritated. 'You are making fun of me.'

'No, in the name of Saint Luke, I am telling you the truth', Aplesphares proclaimed solemnly, 'I happen to have the *Physiologos* here because it was ordered to be copied by his Excellency the High Judge Theodore Meliteniotes, but he finally changed his mind, so he paid me only the price of the paper.'

'This is not a person of whom I have a high opinion.'

'My lord, his literary taste is quite good, even if he happens to think too much of himself. But let me bring the *Physiologos*.' He grabbed a book from the shelf, opened it at a marked page and read the passage about the parrot. Therein were reported the comments of king Livistros and of his friend king Klitovon of Armenia about the Indian bird and its power of protecting people from poisons.

'My lord Demetrios', Paolo said stepping between the two men, 'I just received a handsome payment from my father, so do allow me, I beg you, to offer this book of king Livistros and princess Rhodamne to you as a present for your efforts to teach me Greek.'

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'And I will add the *Physiologos* free of charge to this generous present', Aplesphares added, gleaming with self-satisfaction. He wrapped the two books in a large sheet of thick paper and placed the parcel in front of his old client.

Kydones gave Paolo a querying look. Was this some kind of trick they played on him? he asked himself and then smiled. 'Well, I shall accept the present only if you, Aplesphares, will promise to sell all four of my old books.'

'I indeed promise to do so', said the bookseller and clapped his hands.

'Livistros, Livistros', croaked the parrot.

'That will be some novel reading for you, my dear Demetrios', said Kalopheros, 'who knows, maybe late in your life you might get a liking for such entertaining trifles'.

Kydones took the parcel but did not respond. He seemed perplexed. 'After hearing all of this', he finally said, 'I wonder if these tales are Greek at all. The names and the stories appear to be foreign, even some of the customs, like the French kind of combat which is not truly Greek.'

'If by Greek you mean Homer's Achaeans or the Athenians of Demosthenes, no, they are certainly not', replied Kalopheros, 'but look at you and me, my friend. Are we not Greek, even though both of us are Catholic and are able to speak and write in Latin? Why should stories be otherwise? You don't have to wear a philosopher's tunic and speak like Plato to be a Greek.'

'Of course not, John. But if you wish to polish your language and attain perfection of meaning and expression, let alone succeed as a government official, there is no other way than through the study of the ancients.'

'You are right, my lord Kydones', interrupted the bookseller, 'but as we do not partake of the same food every day, so it is with reading. You cannot possibly read the same texts all your life. Otherwise people like me would be left with no work by which to earn our daily bread. Speaking of which', he said raising his voice, 'allow me to offer you some food and a glass of Malvasia wine. It must be already past the seventh hour and we need some sustenance.'

They all retreated to the inner rooms of the house. The parrot remained on the table. He picked up the last walnut with his claw and looked at it carefully. 'Livistros, Livistros', he croaked and cracked open the nut with his strong beak.

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Third and Last Part, in Which Kydones Meets His Old Patroness, a Young Couple Talking about Love and a Reluctant Husband

It was just before the tenth hour that Demetrios left the bookseller's shop, followed by Thomas who had spent some pleasant time with the assistant of Aplesphares. The sun was still strong on the western sky and they took the road northwards to reach the Blachernai palace. The vesper service has finished and empress Helena Kantakouzené would have retired to her apartments.

Due to the financial difficulties of the imperial household, the south-western wing had been abandoned more than thirty years ago and only the central wing was in use. Kydones stopped in front of the palace's garden and paved forecourt, while Thomas took the horse to the stables. Kydones looked at the two-storey building and thought how many times over the past decades he had passed the main entrance, serving John Kantakouzenos first and then John Palaiologos, every day of the year, sometimes even at night, not resting a moment and filled with anxiety about the downward course of his fatherland. But no, today was not the day for such melancholy feelings. Today he would meet his noble protectress and dear friend. He pulled himself together, walked briskly past the guards and up the stairs to the apartments of the old empress, still holding the parcel with the two books under his arm.

A grave-looking servant pulled back the curtain and let Kydones into the spacious room. From the open windows, the gleaming sea was in full view, while pine and cypress trees covered the slope of the hill down to the sea walls. Empress Helena was sitting on an armchair next to a table. She was dressed in black, a narrow border of red silk thread adorning the ends of her long sleeves – a discreet sign of imperial widowhood. A young couple was seated in front of her; a few empty chairs were placed around the table, while two female servants were standing discreetly at the back wall of the room, next to a narrow door.

'My dear lord Demetrios, what a pleasant surprise', said the empress with a smile on her face. The young couple stood up, looking somewhat embarrassed. Kydones bowed in front of her and profusely expressed his wishes for her name day.

'May Saint Helena always protect you, my lady', he added, 'I apologize for not having visited you earlier, but I was reluctant to do so, while you were still in mourning.'

'Now that you have finally visited the palace, take a seat and join us in our conversation', said the empress and made a sign to her servants.

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They filled dark-blue glasses with rose water from a finely wrought copper ewer and placed a silver plate with dried fruit in front of the guests. 'I think that we will need your learned opinion on a rather serious literary matter', the empress explained.

Kydones raised his brow and turned his gaze at the young man. 'Master James, I see that you have left your study of Demosthenes and spend your precious time in unexpected places.'

'I do apologize, my lord Kydones, but I was invited here by the lady Eirene Asanina to talk to her highness.'

'Demetrios', empress Helena intervened and put her palm on the hand of the young woman next to her, 'Eirene has been staying with me since February in order to acquire the necessary training for becoming the overseer of my household. As you know, I will soon be retreating to the Monastery of Lady Martha, and I need a person of competence and trust to take care of those of my belongings that I have decided to hand over to my new daughter-in-law.'

Kydones remained silent. He had expected that his most beloved pupil would not have yielded to this wish of his mother and would have stayed away from the bonds of marriage. But his hopes that Manuel would always remain under his tutelage had been irrevocably dashed after he married that Serbian princess four months ago.

'And what might the serious literary matter be that your majesty wishes to discuss?' he asked in order to move the conversation in a less distressing direction.

'It is not unrelated to the changes standing before us here in the palace. You see, Eirene wishes to enter imperial service as a married woman, and this is quite reasonable. So, I made the necessary arrangements to find a suitable bridegroom.'

'Master James Pyropoulos?' Kydones uttered. This was simply too much. 'But he is presently my pupil, given to my care by his father. And I find out about this now?' James and Eirene were looking at the ground, ashamed.

'Now, now, my dear friend', said the empress calmly, 'James happens to be the son of my deceased husband's physician and a promising young man, exactly because he is your pupil. Obviously, he will first finish his studies and then marry Eirene. I invited them both here to talk about these matters and to give them some advice. They were telling me about a story they were reading together, wherein a royal couple falls in love after having seen a set of dreamlike visions in which Eros the king brings them together. I had never heard of such a narrative.'

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'It is the *Tale of Velthandros and Chrysantza*', Eirene explained, 'quite an astonishing story, filled with love and sorrowful events'.

'But also some very fine adventure', James added. 'The Rhomaian prince fights just like the border warriors of old and the Latin princess is as brave as she is beautiful'. He looked at Eirene adoringly.

Kydones sighed in despair. It was useless to complain about the course life takes. 'What a coincidence', he remarked with a somewhat embarrassed smile and opened the paper wrapping, 'I happen to have right here a copy of a similar story. It is the *Tale of Livistros and Rhodamne*. It includes the appearance of a most intelligent parrot.' He placed the book in front of the empress. It was her turn to be surprised.

'You have decided to follow recent tastes in literature, my lord?'

'Not really, your highness, but the book was given to me by my pupil Paolo da Milano and Aplesphares, my wily bookseller. You know that I cannot refuse such presents.'

'I know the story of Livistros quite well', James said. 'My father owns a copy of it written together with the *Amorous Tale of Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* in a fine book decorated with some drawings'.

'So, will you finally tell me what the serious literary matter is?', insisted Kydones.

'It is about the appearance of dreams in such stories', Eirene answered. 'Some are very powerful, even frightening, others sad'.

'These dreams are mostly related to the love between the hero and the heroine', James continued. 'In some dreams strange things happen and the readers see buildings, gardens, paintings, even speaking statues. In others dreams some person says something important to the dreamer, as when Eros in the form of a hawk addresses Polyxena in the *Tale of Achilles*.'

'That garden, where the beautiful girl spends her days, reminds me so much of the palace garden right here at Blachernai', said Eirene.

'Dreams do not always refer to love', intervened the empress and pulled a small book from her sleeve. 'This is a story that reminds me of the tales you are referring to and it is called *Verses dedicated to Chastity*, given to me as a present by the High Judge Theodore Meliteneiotes. He wrote it himself when he was a young man, decades ago. The story is set as if in a dream where a stranger finds a beautiful maiden in front of a mysterious palace. She is called Chastity, but at the end of the story we find out that she is dead.'

'So, his excellency has even composed a poem of an erotic character', Kydones commented bitterly. Helena gave the book to James.

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'I know that you do not like the man, Demetrios', she said, 'and you have your good reasons for that. But he does not write that badly, and his poem is not erotic. It rather has an instructive aim, to show us that love is not a purely carnal matter, but that it lifts us up to God, if pursued with the proper sense of modesty and moderation. This is what I was thinking of discussing with Eirene and James this afternoon.'

'However, such tales as the two of them have been reading, do not seem to me to lead to modesty and moderation.'

'Oh but they do, my lord!', exclaimed James, 'in these stories the hero and the heroine have to prove their love to each other, going through many difficulties, while at the end they marry and live happily ever after'.

Kydones raised his hand. 'Let us return to the dreams you mentioned before. Philosophers have contemplated the nature of dreams since the times of Aristotle. Are they external to our perception and thus sent by some divine power, or are they internal and thus created exclusively by our mind? This is difficult to answer, but I would suggest that dreams do reflect our immediate worries and concerns. I myself had a very perplexing dream less than two years ago, and wrote it down because I felt that it expressed my anxiety about imperial service and the waning health of the old emperor. I suppose that the writers of such love stories will use the dream to give a sense of truth and depth to their narrative. Is this not what writers of saints' lives do all the time?' Kydones paused as he was surprised by this unconscious association he had made.

'So, you assume that dreams in a story do have a didactic aim?' asked Helena.

'I believe so, your highness. Sometimes they are admonitory, sometimes prophetic, sometimes even false. Think of Agamemnon's lying dream in the *Iliad* or the dreams of temptation sent by the devil to Saint Anthony.'

'It is in dreams that the hero learns how to behave properly in the affairs of the heart, while the heroine learns how to be compassionate towards the man she loves', Eirene pointed out, glancing at James.

'In these tales, dreams make me feel melancholy', he said, 'as I think of all those wondrous things seen but unobtainable to the reader'.

'But that is the achievement of good poetry', the empress noted, 'How often will we not muse over poems written about people deceased long before our time and feel sad about their deaths, remembering our own deceased relatives and friends'. She stopped, and sipped some rose water, holding the blue glass pensively in her hand.

'Now that you mention this', Eirene said, 'death also makes an appearance in the tales of love. Polyxena dies in the *Tale of Achilles* and her

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husband laments bitterly for her, Livistros laments all the time about his love for Rhodamne, so does Chrysorrhoe for Kallimachos. It seems as if love and death go hand in hand in these stories.'

Kydones looked at the empress. She was still holding her glass, but not listening to the conversation. Too much sadness in her life, he thought, and she has managed it so bravely. 'One thing that I like about these stories', he said raising his voice, 'is the description of nature'.

Helena turned to him and smiled. 'It seems as if it is always spring in these tales', she said.

'Spring should always be in our hearts and in our minds!' proclaimed loudly a deep male voice from the other side of the room. They all turned around and met the steady gaze of emperor Manuel Palaiologos whose towering figure almost blocked the open door. He was wearing a saffron-yellow robe bound around his waist with a broad band of purple taffeta. His brown hair and beard were long and he looked younger than his 42 years. The three guests stood up and bowed their heads.

Kydones was completely unprepared to meet his former pupil, whom he had not talked to for almost two years. A certain nervousness crept over him and he was at a loss for words. Manuel walked to his mother, bowed deeply and kissed her right hand. He then turned to his former teacher and, quite unexpectedly, embraced and kissed him on both cheeks. 'You are indeed looking very well, my lord Demetrios', he commented, his shining dark eyes smiling. 'It is a great joy for me to see you after so long a time.'

The emperor's cheerfulness relaxed Kydones. 'You are looking very well yourself, your majesty', he said. 'Should I suppose that married life becomes you?'

'You are surprised that I finally did marry, aren't you? Well, it could not have been otherwise, though I am not fully convinced of the merits of marriage.'

'Manuel, what are you saying', the empress chided him. 'You will become a father in just a few months!'

'I know, mother, I know', he objected. 'It is because I am worrying that I am saying such things. Forget about it. You were saying something about spring, and it has been such a wonderful day today. Look at the changing colours of the sea now that evening is settling in, smell the fragrance of the flowers from the fields below the palace.'

'We were saying that spring is the time in which the tales of love are acted out, your majesty', said Eirene. 'Gardens of exquisite beauty, flowery meadows, clear streams and shady forests are described by the poets.'

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'Not to mention the astonishing buildings, such as palaces, castles, pavilions, pools and fountains, all placed in artfully tended gardens', added James.

Kydones opened the *Tale of Livistros and Rhodamne*, leafed through some pages, stopped at a rubric indicating the description of a garden in the hero's dream and handed the book to James. 'Will you read a few pages for us, master Pyropoulos?' he asked.

James looked at the empress, who nodded approvingly. The emperor took one of the chairs and placed himself next to his mother. The young man started reading and the finely composed verses of the poem echoed in the room. The beautiful garden took shape in the listeners' minds and they were surprised to find out that the enclosed place belonged to king Eros.

'Quite charming and certainly very convincing', Manuel remarked. 'I have seen very similar gardens in the outskirts of Thessalonike, when I was stationed there years ago.'

Almost despite himself, Kydones found the verses attractive. He had himself written once a description of spring in the Great City and he knew the difficulties of capturing the rebirth of nature on paper. 'You read it very well', he said to James who turned red, as he was not used to such public praise by his teacher.

The empress waved to her servants to fill the glasses of her guests. Time had passed most pleasantly, she thought, and she had arranged for almost everything that she felt needed to be done. She could now retreat to her monastery, take the vows and attend to the salvation of her soul. Kydones looked at her in admiration. In certain respects, she had a stronger will and keener intelligence than her son, let alone her deceased husband. He stood up.

'It is time to leave, your highness', he told her. 'Sad as my heart is at parting from you, I must return to my house before the night covers the streets with darkness.'

They all bade him farewell. 'I will write to you', Manuel added.

'Please do', Kydones said, bowed, and quickly left the room.

Epilogue, in Which the Narrator Makes an Effort to Conclude His Story

The balmy breeze from the sea carried the scent of the pine trees up the hill. As the sun was about to set, the luminous sky turned darker and a flock of crows circled over a dried-out cistern in the distance. Demetrios decided not to ride his horse but to walk back to his house. It had been a

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long day and he needed to think about what he had heard and learned. Thomas, leading the horse by its bridle, walked a few steps behind his master. He just wanted to get back to his wife.

Kydones could not imagine that all these tales of love were actually copied out in the Greek-speaking lands. Obviously, there were many people who enjoyed reading them or just listening to them, including some of his pupils. He had received one of these books as a present to take back home, and he even met an Indian parrot. Now that he thought of it, he was certain that Paolo and Aplesphares had staged this dramatic scene with the parrot to make him read the book. And he would read it out of spite. Well, maybe not for that only, because the description of the garden in the dream was well written, even if not like the garden of Alcinous in the *Odyssey*. What he found most impressive about these tales was the fact that they belonged to a world very distant from the one he wished to inhabit through his readings, though the story matter of the *Iliad* shared some common ground with the tales, if not their language. There were other new things that had puzzled him, like the prominent place of women in these tales. Were they like Penelope or rather like Circe? Or maybe like Nausicaa? No, they seemed to be different.

'Thomas, tell me, do you love your wife?' he asked his servant.

'What did you say, master?'

Kydones repeated his question. Thomas looked at him suspiciously. Did some demon get into the old man making him ask such foolish questions, he wondered, but refrained from crossing himself. 'Yes, I do, my lord, for I'm an orphan and she is all I have in this world', he answered seriously.

'And that is how it should be, my dear fellow', Demetrios remarked. Maybe it was not a bad thing that he had heard today about these tales of love. Especially since empress Helena seemed to like them. If a learned and good-willed person of her standing does not scorn such readings, then he would take a look at them as well. A feeling of contentment rose within him. It was a fine day after all, full of good company and witty conversation. He had now so many new things to think about in a novel manner.

'Thomas', Kydones said, 'once we get back home, you will open the bottle of sweet wine from Samos and invite your wife to join us for dinner. Then if we are not tired, I will read to the two of you a tale of love from older times', he added, leaving his servant aghast.

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Bibliographical Note

In writing this afterword to the present volume, I have been inspired by topics from all chapters, blending them into a discussion about the Palaiologan tales of love. The story is acted out in Constantinople on 21 May 1392, with Demetrios Kydones (1324–97) as the main character, while the remaining characters are all taken from his extensive letter collection. Many of the opinions expressed by Kydones or his interlocutors derive from the letter collections of Kydones, Kalekas and Manuel Palaiologos. Beyond the bibliography on the romances quoted in the chapters of this volume, I have used the following items: R.-J. Loenertz, *Manuel Calécas: Correspondance* (Città del Vaticano, 1950); F. Kianka, 'Demetrius Cydones (*c.* 1324–*c.* 1397): Intellectual and Diplomatic Relations between Byzantium and the West in the Fourteenth Century' (PhD. thesis, Fordham University, NY, 1981); F. Kianka, 'The Letters of Demetrios Kydones to Empress Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 46 (1992), 155–64; R.-J. Loenertz, *Démètrius Cydonès: Correspondance*, 2 vols. (Città del Vaticano, 1956–60); Franz Tinnefeld, *Demetrios Kydones: Briefe. Erläutert und übersetzt*, 5 vols. (Stuttgart, 1981–2003); K. P. Matschke and F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft im späten Byzanz: Gruppen, Strukturen und Lebensformen* (Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2001); G. T. Dennis, *Manuel II Palaiologus: The Letters. Text, Translation and Notes* (Washington, DC, 1977); F. Tinnefeld, *Die Briefe des Demetrios Kydones: Themen und literarische Form* (Wiesbaden, 2010); F. Tinnefeld, 'Freundschaft und *Paideia*: Die Korrespondenz des Demetrios Kydones mit Rhadenos (1375–1387/8)', *Byzantion*, 55 (1985), 210–44. My sincerest thanks extend to Polymnia Katsoni for her help in approaching Kydones and fourteenth-century society in Byzantium. Last but not least, this little story is dedicated to my old teacher Franz Tinnefeld, whose work on Kydones has been invaluable to all students of Palaiologan literature. J. R. Ryder, The Career and Writings of Demetrius Kydones: A Study of Fourteenth-Century Byzantine Politics, Religion and Society (Leiden-Boston, 2010).

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Index

abduction, 49, 57, 71–3, 130, 194–6, 262, 280, 284, 288, 307, 310, *see also* kidnapping
acculturation, 8, 101–21
Achilles, 104, 156, 177, 180, 190, 192–3, 196, 200, 202, 230, 244, 258–9, 263–5, 281, 288, 290, 322, 324, 326
Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, 24–5, 53, 180–1, 310
adaptation, xiii, 2, 6–9, 11, 15, 19–35, 42–4, 55, 60–1, 101–2, 106, 108, 114, 118, 121, 131, 146–7, 153, 160, 189, 201, 203, 206, 212, 232, 291
addition, 102, 132
adventure, 3, 103, 116, 128–31, 211, 234, 239–40, 242, 290, 309, 334
  adventure time, 130
aesthetic, 206
aesthetics, 2, 3, 5, 7–11, 21, 25, 27, 98, 196–7, 199, 206–7
affect theory, 14–15, 299–316
Agamemnon, 166, 193–6, 263, 265, 335
agency, 76–97, 196, 280
Aldus Manutius, 71
Alexander the Great, 11, 192–3, 211–24, 326
Alexander and Semiramis, xvii, 19
Alexander Romance, xviii, 11, 41, 178, 211–24, 239
Alix of Blois, 45, 61
allegory, xviii, 43, 72, 188, 281, 286, 292, 294
allusion, 2, 6, 22–3, 25, 28–9, 32, 48, 116, 189–90, 192, 201, 220–2, 278
Amazon(s), 214, 239, 244
amulet(s), 105, 108, 113
ancient novel, 2–5, 8, 13, 32, 53, 128–9, 132, 135, 138, 207, 231, 234, 239, 245–6, 276, 285, 287, 305–7, 316
Andromache, 28
Andromeda, 53–4, 57
Andronikos I Komnenos, 234
Andronikos II Palaiologos, 21, 49, 53, 58, 233, 286
Anna Doukaina of Epiros, 175, 182
Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, 179
Anna, wife of Andronikos II, 237
Anthologia Palatina, 53
anthropology, 7, 74
Antonio Pucci, *Cantari di Apollonio di Tiro*, 127, 131, 139
Aphrodite, 278, *see also* Venus
Apollo, 221
Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, 53
Apollonios of Tyre (Greek version), 8, 19–20, 32–4, 43, 102, 125–40, 201
apple(s), 49, 57, 114, 274, 276
Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 47, 52, 55–6
Arabian Nights (*Qamar az-Zaman*), 116
Arabic, 119, 195, 198, 216, *see also* Perso-Arabic
Aristotle, 214, 328, 335
Arrian, *Indica*, 223
Artabanus, 213, 217, 219–20
Artemis, 277, *see also* Diana
Arthur, 244
Arthurian tales, 25, 206, 244, 311
Assises de Romanie, 152, 173–4
Athens, 118–19, 221, 223, 238, 241
auctores, 30
auctoritas, 22, 25, 28
audience, 2, 6, 8, 23, 28, 42, 61, 102–3, 111, 120, 247, 261, 284, 302, 315, *see also* reader *and* listener
Augustine, 42, 329

Babylon, 50, 214, 221–2, 238
Baghdad, 40
Barlaam and Joasaph, 23, 41, 231
Basilica of St Peter, 107, 116
beauty, 46–7, 52, 103, 106, 113, 176, 193, 202, 239, 261, 267, 273, 275–80, 282, 286, 293–4, 313, 336
  beauty contest, 238, 277, 284
Bellerophon, 193–4
Benoît de Sainte-Maure, *Roman de Troie*, 1, 8, 20, 25, 61, 149–63, 166–7, 169–71, 173–5, 179–80, 254–5, 268

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biblical, 95, 137, 174, 193–4, 215, 285, 308, 325
bilingualism, 146, 157, 161–3
bird(s), 88, 92, 105, 107, 113, 115–16, 198, 281, 309, 328, 330
Blachernai palace, 321, 326–7, 332, 334
Boccaccio, 20, 114
body, 34, 52, 92–4, 243, 245, 278, 286, 293, 303, 305–7, 313
Briseis, 13, 177, 201, 258, 325

Calabria, 235
Callisthenes, 211, 223–4
Calypso, 279, 286
canon, 4, 6, 8, 239, 246
Carthage, 50, 238
castle, 49, 51, 56–7, 86, 88, 97, 169, 171, 205, 273–6, 282–3, 285, 288, 303–4, 337, *see also* palace
Catholic, 172, 321, 331
Central Asia, 40
Chansonnier du Roi, 174–5
Charles of Anjou, 170–1, 175
Charon, 307
chastity, 231, 282–3, 326, 334
  chastity test, 285, 309
Chimaira, 193
China, 40
chivalric tales, 30, 33, 54, 60–1, 118, 126, 137, 147, 212, 244
Chora monastery, 322, 325, 327
Chrétien de Troyes, 25, 45, 274
  Cligès, 45
  Erec et Enide, 290
  Knight of the Cart, 194
  Lancelot, 60
Christ, 25, 133–4, 136, 326
Christian, 32, 55, 133–5, 138, 140, 197, 215, 239–40, 247, 285, 308, 325–6
Christianity, 195, 215, 326
Christianisation, 25, 127, 132, 308
Christos Paschon, 25
Chronicle of Machairas, 150, 152
Chronicle of Morea, 150, 155–6, 159–60, 169–70, 173, 178–9
chronotope, 8–9, 125–40
Chryseis, 201
Chryses, 195
Circe, 286, 338
Cistercians, 119
citation, 2, 6, 189–90
Clementine Homilies, 239
Consolatory Fable About Bad and Good Fortune, xviii–xix
Constantine Akropolites, 233–7, 239
Constantine Manasses, *Synopsis Chronike*, 181, 203
Constantine Porphyrogenitos, *De virtutibus*, 220
Constantine the Great, 321
Constantinople, 7, 22, 42–3, 46, 117, 119, 146, 170, 172, 181, 232, 235, 238, 242, 246, 321
Corpus Parisinum, 220
Council of Lyon, 117, 233
courtly love, 109, 120
  amour courtois, 109–14
Crete, 42, 118, 127, 146, 155, 241
Croesus, 222
cross-dressing, 237–8
cultural exchange, 5, 9, 58, 144–63, 289–92
cultural transfer, 2, 7, 9
Cupid, 52, 55, 69–70, 91–5, 303, *see also* Eros *and* god of love
Curtius, 223
Cyclops, 193–4
Cyprus, 42, 140, 146, 150, 152, 172, 240, 242, 310, 328
Cyrus the Great, 221–2

Dante, *Divina comedia*, 25
Daphni Monastery, 117, 119
Dares the Phrygian, 25, 167
Darius, 222–3
David, 193
death, 14, 71, 73, 75, 92–3, 107, 113, 128, 136–7, 194, 197, 200, 202, 214–16, 240, 324, 334
  erotics of death, 13, 299–316
  meditatio mortis, 215
  memento mori, 214–16
Demetrios Kydones, 16, 321–38
Demetrios Triklinios, 217
demon(s), 46, 93, 236, 238, 338
Demosthenes, 331
desire, 13, 27, 70, 72, 75, 84–8, 90–1, 96, 111–12, 121, 179, 197, 200, 241, 254, 256–7, 259, 265, 268, 284, 289, 291, 299, 306, 310, 312–14, 316
Diana, 94–6, 129, *see also* Artemis
Dictys of Crete, 25, 167
Digenis Akritis, xviii–xix, 11, 21, 24, 34, 57, 109–10, 178, 182, 190–6, 199, 202–3, 230, 244, 254, 277, 280, 288, 307–8, 316
diglossia, 144
Diodorus, *Library of History*, 218
dragon(s), 49–50, 52, 54, 56–7, 91, 110–11, 246, 274, 285–6, 288, 329
dream(s), 27, 70–98, 112, 195, 242, 334–5, 337, *see also* vision
duel(s), 47, 106, 109–11, 116, 243, 263

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eagle(s), 50, 92
ecocriticism, 13, 15, 272–94
ecofeminism, 272–3, 292, 294
ecophobia, 274–5, 293
ecstasy, 95, 306
education, 44, 50, 53, 84, 90, 136, 192, 302, 304, *see also paideia*
Egypt, 60, 172, 274, 305, 315
ekphrasis, 50, 53, 114, 193, 207, 239, 274, 277–9
Eleanor of Aquitaine, 45, 167
elite, 22, 240, 299–302, 304, 306–9, 315–16
emir, 120, 192, 194–6, 262
emotion(s), 14, 69–70, 85, 89–90, 96, 113, 126, 214, 245, 256, 267, 280, 285–6, 299–316
  emotional communities, 300–2
enslavement, 87, 89, 177, 180–1, 195, 260, 282, 314
epic, 2, 8, 11, 31, 130–1, 139, 167, 189–90, 197, 199, 201, 254–5, 277, 316, 323
epilogue, 59, 337–8
Erkoulios, 10, 162, 166, 322, *see also* Herkules
Eros, 6, 24, 32, 43, 54, 72, 76, 84–8, 179–81, 196, 203, 276–7, 282, 284–5, 287, 293, 303–4, 307, 313–14, 333–4, 337, *see also* Cupid *and* god of love
eroticism, 46, 282–3, 285, 315–16
ethnicity, 3, 40
ethnography, 301–2
  emotional ethnography, 301
ethnology, 74
Eumathios Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 24, 32, 181–2, 275–6, 282
eunuch(s), 87–8, 288, 304, 314
Euphrates, 221
Euphrosyne of Alexandria, 237
Euripides, 328
  Bacchae, 25
  Medea, 25
Eustathios of Thessalonike, 56, 188, 190
  Commentary on the Iliad, 217

fairy tale, 49, 54, 57
  fairy-tale type, 55–6, 128
fate, 8, 32, 86, 222, 261, 309
fear(s), 46, 50–1, 92, 95, 111, 113, 197, 213, 218, 266, 273–5, 283, 292, 300
female, 8, 13, 52, 70, 72, 91, 234, 236–9, 256–7, 266, 268, 273–94
feminine, 245, 273–94, 305
fertility, 273, 285–6, 292
  infertility, 235
Floire et Blancheflor, 41, 50
Florios and Platziaflora, xvi, 19, 21, 26, 32–3, 43, 104, 112–14, 120, 146–8, 150, 152, 154, 158, 160, 163, 178, 279, 289, 329
folklore, 44, 47, 61, 246
folk tale, 7, 41, 44, 52, 54–8, 118–19, 130
forest, 46, 75, 92, 275, 336, *see also* woods
fortune, 30, 131, 139, 196, 304
Fourth Crusade, 61, 119, 121, 232
Francesco Colonna, 71
friendship, 242, 255, 257, 259–61, 264–5, 268

garden, 24, 34, 73, 85, 170, 273–94, 322–3, 327, 332, 334, 337
  garden of Alcinous, 338
gardener, 49, 279–82, 293–4, 322
Gautier d'Arras, *Eracle*, 45
gender, 3, 5, 13, 15, 52, 55, 76, 96–8, 255, 269, 273, 286–7, 292–4, 304
genealogy, 6, 19, 24, 29, 191–2, 316
genre, 4–12, 15, 26–7, 29, 31, 118, 120, 144, 147–9, 154, 188, 190, 192, 203–7, 231, 299–300, 315
Geoffrey Chaucer
  House of Fame, 25
  The Knight's Tale, 279
George Akropolites, 117
George of Pelagonia, 242
George/Gregory of Cyprus, 233
Georgides, *Florilegium*, 220
God, 31–2, 108, 116, 134, 136–8, 195, 215, 286, 308, 323, 325, 327, 335
god(s) of love, 24, 70, 72, 74, 84, 92–3, 95, 97, *see also* Eros *and* Cupid
Gog and Magog, 214
Goliath, 193
Gottfried van Strassburg, *Tristan*, 194
Grandes Chroniques de France, 170, 174–5
Greek Anthology, 24, *see also Anthologia Palatina*
Gregory of Nazianzus, 25, 326
grief, 14, 75, 92, 196, 198, 204, 267, 290, 301–2, 304–6, 309, 311–14
Guinevere, 194

hagiography, 8, 12, 15, 20, 56, 93, 95, 104, 131, 135, 207, 230–47, 300, 326
Harun ibn Yayah, 216
heart(s), 59, 87, 92, 94, 103, 136, 180, 243, 291, 293, 300, 302–3, 313–14, 321, 326, 335–7
heaven, 92, 133, 202, 238, 273
Hekabe, 180, 200
Hektor, 28, 167, 192, 202, 258, 263, 266–7, 324
Helen of Troy, 13, 177, 200–2, 257–8, 265–7
Helena Kantakouzene, 321, 332–8
Helena, mother of Constantine, 321
Heliodorus, *An Ethiopian Story*, 24, 307, 310

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Henry II Plantagenet, 20, 167
Herakles, 10, 162, 166, 260, 322–3
Hermogenes, *On Types of Style*, 219
Hero and Leander, 309
Herodotus, 11–12, 15, 135, 211–24
heroism, 192, 194, 300
Hesione, 13, 257–8, 260–2, 264
Hesychasm, 22, 232, 240–2, 245
Histoire Universelle, 174
Historia Apollonii regis Tyri, 127, 135, 137, 139
Historia Lausiaca, 135
Homer, 10–12, 15, 24–5, 28, 167, 188–207, 322–3, 331
  Iliad, 10, 28, 167, 190, 194–5, 201–3, 206, 324, 335
  Odyssey, 10, 167, 190, 194, 203–6, 338
homoeroticism, 256
homophobia, 256, 258, 266
homosexuality, 256, 259
homosociality, 13, 254–69
horse(s), 110, 114–15, 172, 175, 224, 246, 274, 321–2, 327, 329, 332, 337
Hue de Rotelande, *Hypomédon*, 60
hunter, 236, 238, 245, 277
hunting, 46, 55, 236–7
hybridity, 7, 15, 48, 231, 233
Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, 7, 69–98

identity, 10, 15, 71, 90, 111, 118, 175, 204, 214, 247, 300, 304, 314
ideology, 5, 8–10, 13, 33, 102, 191, 196, 212, 247, 255–6, 258, 268, 291, 304
imitation, 25, 27, 29, 146, 194
Imperios and Margarona, 1, 8, 19–21, 27, 29–31, 33, 43, 60, 101–21, 146–8, 151, 154, 158, 160, 178, 201, 244–5
incest, 34, 128, 130–1, 135, 137–8
India, 214, 324
initiation, 7, 70–98
innovation, 5, 22, 131, 139, 156
intertextuality, 5, 7, 14, 27–8, 48, 54, 74, 176–82, 302, 315–16
Iris, 202
Islam, 289, *see also* Muslim
Itys, 309

Jason, 166, 177–80, 259
Jeremiah, 214
Jerome, 218
Joan Timoneda, *Patraña oncena del Patrañuelo*, 131, 139
John Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, 215
John Kantakouzenos, 241, 332
John Laskaris Kalopheres, 326, 328–31
John Mandeville, *Travels*, 310, 316
John Palaiologos, 332
John Tarchaneiotes, 322–6
John Tzetzes, 53, 188, 190, 217, 324
  Chiliades, 217
  Letters, 217
  Scholia on Lycophron's *Alexandra*, 53
John VIII, 118
Joseph Kalothetos, 240
joust, 106, 110, 243, 290, *see also* tournament

Kalila wa Dimna, 41
Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe, xiv, 7, 13–14, 19–21, 23, 27, 30, 32–4, 43–4, 103, 145, 147, 152, 161, 170, 204–5, 231, 246, 272, 274–5, 277–81, 284, 286, 288–90, 312–14, 316, 334, 336
Kallistos, patriarch, 240, 242
Kandake, 214
Kandaules, 224
katabasis, 23, 230
kidnapping, 13, 129, 194, 243, *see also* abduction
king(s), 24, 33, 46–9, 60, 70, 84, 87, 104, 107–8, 111, 119, 128, 137, 150, 174–5, 196, 200, 204–5, 212–16, 218, 221, 223, 236, 243–4, 259–63, 274, 281, 291, 310, 313, 315, 324, 330, 333, 337
knight(s), 33–4, 106, 109–11, 116, 172, 176–8, 244, 290
Komnenian novel, xviii, 2–5, 13, 23–4, 32, 154, 189, 207, 231, 234, 239, 246, 276, 285, 287, 309
Konstantinos Hermoniakos, *Metaphrasis of the Iliad*, 201

lament, 59, 200, 204, 207, 214, 216, 267, 305–6, 309, 313–14, 336
Lancelot, 194, 206
landscape, 13, 71, 96, 170–1, 272–94
language interference, 8, 144–63
Laomedes, 260
learned language/literature, xviii, 2–5, 9–10, 12, 15, 21, 23–4, 28, 30–1, 42–4, 54–5, 58, 144–5, 152, 154, 160–3, 181, 191, 199, 203, 207, 216, 224, 232–3, 247
Leo VI, 236–7
Leonardo de Veroli, 171
Libro d'Apollonio (Tuscan), 127, 131
Libro de Apolonio (Castilian), 131, 139
Life of Aninas, 239
Life of Euphrosyne the Younger, 234–8
Life of Gregory Sinaites, 242
Life of John of Herakleia, 242
Life of John Vatatzes, 242–4, 247
Life of Makarios the Roman, 231
Life of Philotheos of Athos, 245

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Life of Sabas the Younger, 240–2
Life of Symeon and Theodore, 246
Life of Theoktiste of Lesbos, 236–7, 245
Life of Theophano, 234, 238–9, 325
Life of Thomaïs, 234
liminality, 49, 75, 97, 309
linguistic, 2, 4–5, 7–8, 10, 22, 27, 35, 43, 71, 144–63, 168–9, 182, 189, 199, 300–1
  linguistic variety, 145
lion(s), 50, 92, 110–11, 192, 205, 243
listener(s), 133, 189, 301, 311, 323, 337
Livistros and Rhodamne, xiii–xiv, 7, 13, 19, 23–4, 30, 33–4, 43–4, 51, 58–61, 69–98, 147, 150, 179–80, 231, 244, 246, 272, 274–5, 278, 282, 290, 313–16, 330, 334, 336–7
Livre d'Artus, 311, 316
Logos paregoretikos, 30
Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe*, 276, 306–7, 309–10
Louis IX, 170, 172, 174
Louis of Blois, 61
Louis VII, 45
luxury, 30, 40–1, 174, 243

magic, 7, 46, 48–9, 56, 113, 246, 275, 281, 329
Makarios Chrysokephalos, 240
male, 8, 13, 52, 70, 72, 91, 97–8, 195, 239, 255–66, 268, 273, 275, 281, 283, 287–8, 290, 293
Manouel Melikis, 179
Manuel I Komnenos, 110, 324
Manuel Kalekas, 322–6
Manuel Palaiologos, 336–7
Manuel Philes, 286
manuscript(s), xviii, 5, 11, 30, 45, 59, 71, 74, 102, 114, 118, 127, 132, 147, 151, 154–5, 160–1, 167–8, 170, 172–6, 179, 190–1, 196, 199, 216, 230
Marie de France, *Lais*, 47
Marinos Falieros, *Logoi didaktikoi*, 26
marriage, 5, 7, 33–4, 42, 46, 48, 61, 71, 98, 104, 108, 112, 120, 128, 175, 182, 194–6, 204, 237–8, 243, 256, 277, 280, 283–4, 294, 325, 333, 336
martyrdom, 135, 233–4, 240, 246, 326
Mary of Egypt, 236–7
masculine, 13, 245, 257, 266, 273, 279, 284, 286, 288, 293, 305
Matthew Kamariotes, *Eulogy of Gregory of Nicom*edia, 246
Maximos Chrysoberges, 322–6
Maximos Planudes, 53–4
Medea, 177–8, 180, 255, 259
Mediterranean, 4–5, 7, 13–14, 40–2, 74, 172, 240, 299–316
Medusa, 311
melancholy, 11, 212, 218, 221, 321, 329, 332, 335
Melissa Augustana, 220
Meliteniotes (Theodore?), *Verses on Chastity*, xviii–xix, 231, 334
Menelaos, 166, 194, 200–1, 257, 263, 265
Merlin (prose work), 310
metaphor, 6, 27, 72, 76, 129, 268, 303, 314
metre, 5, 26, 47, 153
Michael Glykas, 21
Michael of Epiros, 182
Michael Psellos, 24
Michael VIII, 233, 240
Michael VIII Palaiologos, 117
mimesis, 24, 189
miracle(s), 236–7, 246
misogyny, 256–7
monastery, 109, 117, 119–20, 200–1, 235, 237, 241, 245, 322, 333, 337
monster(s), 49, 54, 57, 292, 310
  monstrous, 310, 312, 316
morality, 8, 30, 33, 230–1, 244, 247, 285
Morea, 11, 42, 169, 171–6, 217
Moses, 193
Mount Athos, 220, 240–2
mountain(s), 49, 204
music, 29, 90–1, 110, 174
Muslim, 32, 240–1, *see also* Islam
myth(s), 53, 55, 190, 193, 237, 311
mytheme, 11
mythology, 52–5, 57, 60, 93, 130, 193

Naples, 103, 106, 109–10, 114, 170, 173, 196–7
narrative frame, 58, 112, 130, 246
narrative sequence, 49–50, 56–7, 128–9
narrative structure, 55–6, 70, 72, 75, 102
narratological, xviii, 2–3, 11–12, 15, 74, 194, 213
narratology, 7, 15, 76–96, 189
narrator, 1, 47–8, 58–9, 72–3, 102–6, 192, 197–8, 202, 242, 261, 263, 265, 313, 321, 337
  intradiegetic narrator, 58–9
  narrative voice, 194, 241
  narratorial intervention, 104–5, 206
  refocalisation, 202
nationalism, 9–10
Nearchus, *Indian Periplus*, 223
necrophilia, 310–12
Nikephoros Gregoras, 233, 238–40, 242, 325
  Roman History, 217
Nikephoros Moschopoulos, 172
Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, 233–8
Niketas Choniates, *History*, 32, 234

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Niketas Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles*, 24, 32, 276, 309–10, 316
Niketas Magistros, 25, 245
Nizami of Ganja (Niẓāmī Ganjavī), *Haft Paykar* (*Seven Beauties*), 23, 291–2

oath(s), 177, 180, 195, 264
Odo of Deuil, 46
Odysseus, 167, 193–4, 203–5, 242, 265
Old Knight, xvii, 19, 30, 33, 43, 102, 205–6, 244
omission, 102, 114–20, 132, 329
One Thousand and One Nights, 291
orality, 4–5, 11, 26–30, 41, 43–4, 47, 51, 55–8, 61, 103, 106, 169, 177, 181–2, 189, 192, 202, 207
original, xiii, 2, 6, 8–10, 12, 15, 19–35, 43, 45, 47, 58–9, 76, 101–2, 106, 127, 144–9, 153–5, 157–60, 162–3, 168, 176, 178, 206, 211, 232, 235, 237–9, 254
originality, 6, 11, 20, 24, 52, 58
Orthodox, 119–21, 172, 232, 240
Otto La Roche, 119
Ottoman Turks, 6, 119, 121, 216, 232, 240–2, 245, 321
Ovid, 42, 54
  Ars amatoria, 53
  Heroides, 53
  Metamorphoses, 53
  Remedia amoris, 53

paideia, 247, *see also* education
pain(s), 84, 89, 130, 267, 303, 309
palace, 46, 49–51, 92, 105, 132, 192, 204, 266–7, 274, 280, 288, 327, 332–4, 337, *see also* castle
paradise, 34, 133, 230, 273, 276, 286, 290–1
  Eden, 133
Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai, 53
Paris, city in France, 170, 172, 174
Paris, prince of Troy, 23, 177, 191, 194, 196–7, 200–1, 258–9, 261–4, 266
Partonopeu de Blois, 7, 44–61, 329
passion, 27, 32, 87, 111–12, 133, 196, 285, 299, 302, 304, 307, 309, 313–14
Passion of Agnese, 135
Passion of Barbaros, 239
Passion of Lucia, 135
passivity, 3, 32, 86, 94, 97, 268–9, 289
Patroklos, 197, 244, 258
peacock, 114–15
Pege church (Theotokou tes Peges), 236
Peloponnese, 114, 140, 146, 150, 155, 162, 172, 235, 241
Penelope, 193, 205, 338
Perseus, 53–4, 57
Persians, 6, 14, 47, 60, 212, 221–3
Perso-Arabic, 13, 290–2, 294
Peter II of Aragon, 116
Philomela, 309
Philotheos Kokkinos, 240, 242
Philotheos of Selymbria, 240
Photios, 24, 117, 325
Physiologos, 330
Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelonne, 1, 8, 34, 60, 101–21
pimp, 129, 132, 134
piracy, 107, 129, 306, 310
Planciadis Fulgentius, 52
Plato, 24, 242, 326–7, 331
Pliny the Younger, 218
Plutarch, 28, 239
  Apophthegms of Kings and Generals, 218
  Parallel Lives, 326
  That Epicurus Actually Makes a Pleasant Life Impossible, 219
politics, 4, 7, 9–11, 15, 32, 42, 76, 102, 117, 137, 174–5, 182, 195, 212, 232–3, 240–2, 273, 301, 326
polyphony, 29
Polyxena, 13, 177, 180, 258–9, 263, 266–7, 334–5
popular language/literature, 2, 20–1, 23, 28, 31, 33–4, 42–5, 55–6, 58, 163, 212, 224
postcolonial theory, 15
pregnancy, 105, 132, 200, 286
Priam, 48, 167, 200, 257–8, 260–2, 264–5, 267
prince(s), 32, 34, 45, 112, 115, 129, 134–5, 169, 171, 175, 236, 238, 243–4, 274, 329, 334
princess(es), 42, 49, 56–7, 60–1, 70, 88, 103, 107–8, 110, 113, 243–4, 291, 329–30, 333–4
printed books, 20, 28, 71
prologue, 1–2, 30, 48, 101, 197, 203, 321–2
prose, 1, 70–1, 167, 169–70, 173, 175, 310, 326
Providence, 32, 131, 139
Psalter of Louis IX, 170
Pseudo-Antonius, *Melissa*, 220
Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitiones*, 130, 138
Pseudo-Maximus, *Loci communes*, 220
Psyche, 52, 55
psychology, 30, 90, 214, 254

queen(s), 58, 90, 105, 107, 167, 214, 224, 261, 280
queer theory, 13, 15
quotation, 25, 137, 188–9, 219–20

race, 3, 61, 133, 200, 241, 273
rape, 34, 93, 239, 280

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reader(s), 2, 8, 14, 16, 20, 22–3, 26, 28–30, 33–4, 71, 168, 191–2, 216, 218, 272, 291, 294, 299, 308, 316, 324, 326, 329, 334–5
recognition, 22, 90, 107, 128–30, 136, 138, 245
religion, 31–2, 40, 76, 95–7, 115, 117–21, 131, 134, 231–2, 273, 285–6, 300, 302, 308, 316
reunion, 73, 108–9, 128–9, 205, 232, 245
rhetoric, 2, 8, 11, 15, 21, 24, 43–4, 59, 130, 190, 197, 216, 218, 232, 234, 239, 242, 246–7, 330
rhyme, 1, 21, 28, 30–2, 112, 118
riddle(s), 128, 132, 137
Rimada (*Alexander Romance*), 211
Rimada (*Apollonios of Tyre*), 127
ring(s), 49, 107–8, 111–14, 116, 329
rite of passage, 74–6, 96
Roman d'Eneas, 50
Romanos Lekapenos, 237
romans d'antiquité, 47, 167
Rome, 107–8, 116–17, 238
rose, 276–80, 335
Rumi, 291
Rusticiano da Pisa, *Gyrons li Courtois*, 205

Sacrifice of Abraham, 32
Saint Anthony, 335
Saint Demetrios, 326
Saint George, 57, 246
Saint Paul, 95, 119
Saint Peter, 107–8, 116–17, 119, 121
Sainte Chapelle, 172
Samson, 192–3
Satalia, 310–12
sea, 49, 107, 129, 132, 197, 200, 246, 274, 310, 332, 336–7
  seascape, 275
Semiramis and Alexander, 28
Seneca, *On the shortness of life*, 218
separation, 73, 75, 104, 113, 118, 128, 232, 307, 309
serpent, 50, 110–11, 280, 310, 312, 316, *see also* snake
sexuality, 3, 13, 283–7, 311
Sindibad, 41
snake, 49, 314, *see also* serpent
Solomon, 325
Song of Songs, 285
sorrow, 30, 136, 204–5, 258, 267, 300, 303, 334
Spaneas, 26
spatiality, 75, 91, 97, 126
  spatial aesthetics, 98
  spatio-temporal, 132–8
Statius, 167
Stobaeus, *Anthology*, 219–20
Story of Belisarios, 23
Suda, 220
suicide, 75, 92, 97, 305, 310
sultan, 47, 60, 107, 109, 113
symbolism, 90, 92, 96, 182, 237, 261, 273, 280, 283–4, 286, 288–9
Symeon Metaphrastes, 233

Tale of Achilles, xv, 1, 11, 13, 19, 23, 28, 30, 33, 104, 109–12, 170, 179–80, 190–1, 196–207, 230, 232, 244, 254, 272, 276–8, 281, 283–4, 288, 290, 334–5
Tale of Troy, xvi, 11, 19, 21, 23, 27, 33, 190, 196–203, 206–7, 232, 254
talisman, 109, 113
taxonomy, 6, 12, 125
tear(s), 92, 212, 214–15, 217–20, 222, 267, 306, 309, 313
teichoscopy, 201–2, 266–7
Teseida, xvii, 19, 30, 33, 43
Theodore Balsamon, 56
Theodore Hyrtakenos, 239
  Ekphrasis of St Anna's Garden, 170, 286, 288
Theodore Laskaris, 243
Theodore Meliteniotes, 330
Theodore Prodromos, 21
  Historical poems, 181
  Rhodanthe and Dosikles, 24, 235, 277, 281, 310
Theotokos, 286
Thetis, 197–8
Thibaut V, 45, 61
Thomas Aquinas, 42, 329
Thucydides, 24, 328
torture, 69, 92, 277, 303, 314
tournament, 47, 60, 103, 106, 108–11, 114, 121, *see also* joust
translation, xiii, 2, 5–6, 8–12, 15, 19, 42, 53, 101, 121, 144, 146–9, 151–5, 158, 160–1, 163, 166, 168, 176, 178, 197–8, 206, 211, 244, 254, 289, 292, 329
  translatio auctoritatis, 31–3
translator, 2, 102, 108–9, 112–13, 115, 117, 120, 146, 154, 158, 160–3, 169, 178, 206
tree(s), 49, 92, 119, 276–7, 279–80, 286, 288, 291, 322, 327, 332
Tristan, 206
troubadour poetry, 47–8
turtledove, 75, 84

Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Words and Deeds*, 218
Velthandros and Chrysantza, xiv, 1, 13, 19–20, 23, 30, 33–4, 43, 50–1, 147, 152, 155, 157, 160, 170, 179, 231, 272, 275, 277, 283–5, 287–9, 303–5, 314, 316, 334
Venice, 28, 71, 74, 118

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Venus, 72, 76, 91, 94–6, *see also* Aphrodite
verse, 5, 148, 166, 169, 173, 202, 232, 247, 323–4, *see also* metre
Virgil, 167
Virgin Mary, 245, 290, *see also* Theotokos
 Marian imagery, 285
virginity, 57, 132, 135, 138, 282–3, 285
vision, 25, 27, 73, 92, 95, 230, 245, 333, *see also* dream

Wace, *Roman de Brut*, 48
War of Troy (Greek version), xiv, 1, 8, 10, 13, 19–20, 33, 43, 145–63, 166–82, 190, 203, 207, 232, 254–69, 324, 326–9
wedding, 45–7, 58–9, 120, 132, 236, 238, 243, 285, 291
William of Tyre, *Histoire d'Outremers*, 174
William Villehardouin, 171–2, 175, 182
witch, 49, 274–5, 290, 329
woods, 46, 104–5, 274, 315, *see also* forest

Xenophon of Ephesus, *An Ephesian Tale*, 305–7, 310, 316
Xerxes, 11, 212–22

Yolonta/Irene, wife of Andronikos II, 237

Zeus, 195

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